Institutional Adaptation and Public Policy Practices of Military Transfer Credit

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ABSTRACT

Veterans who served our country, return with a wealth of experience that transfer into military credit for prior service. These transfer credits in institutions of higher education apply towards education degree attainment. With colleges and universities implementing individual policies for acceptance of credits, veterans experience a loss of credits leading to a duplication of required classes to achieve degrees. To understand inconsistent practices, both federal and institutions of higher education polices are examined. Framed by institutionalization theory, this research sheds light on the public policy process and administration of credit at the organization over time. The study provides findings for how the largest public college and higher education institution in the state of California awards academic credit for military education. Evidence suggests that public higher education institutions adapt based on effective leaders who define and defend the organization's institutional values and mission.

This study provides findings on institutional adaptations to create policies and practices that public administrators use to apply transfer military credit into postsecondary academic credit. The focus is on postsecondary credit transferred, or articulated, by entering military first-year students using the GI Bill. The study asks how have major institutions of higher education formalized institutional policies and practices on awarding academic credit for military education?

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

Veterans who served our country, return with a wealth of experience that transfer into military credit for prior service. Military veterans attend colleges and universities seek credit from military experiences to achieve degrees. The study provides findings for how the largest public college and higher education institution in the state of California awards academic credit for military education. Evidence suggests that public higher education institutions change their policies based on effective leaders who define and defend the organization's institutional values and mission.

This study provides findings on how colleges and universities apply transfer military credit into postsecondary academic credit. The focus is military first-year students using the GI Bill and how they transfer credit. The study asks how have major institutions of higher education formalized institutional policies and practices on awarding academic credit for military education?

Acknowledgements

This dissertation came out of my personal interest working as an employee and faculty member in the state of California. After seeing my own students struggle with veteran credit or giving up on the process completely, I knew there was research that needed to take place to create a clear and more open policy across the state higher education system.

I am grateful for the expert advice and dedication of my Chair, Dr. Matt Dull, for always encouraging me and providing me with support to finish. I am thankful for Dr. Jensen for providing me with support and patience early on in my research to find a specific topic beyond the GI Bill and probably the best advice to keep sitting in my chair and writing no matter how hard and lonely it became. Dr. Dudley for providing me with encouragement as I worked on my capstone projects to make my ideas clear and direct. Lastly, many thanks to Dr. Jordan for helping me with the IRB process at each campus. I felt trapped by the red tape and wall of the institutions and you helped me break free in the process to finally get the data that I needed to complete the research. Thank you to Dr. Rees for supporting my project as I made final edits and changes and giving this paper a strong Selznick lens for seeing public administration.

There were many obstacles that I faced writing this and I could not have done it without the support and encouragement from my mom, sister, stepfather, and most important my husband, Chad. You always knew that I would finish, but it just took me longer than expected as we grew our family along the way. Thanks to childcare support from our babysitter, Meggie, with whom I could not sit for many years and write. This dissertation is dedicated to my own children, Charlie and Carly, and future scholars who will lead the way for a stronger public policy and administration in colleges and university.

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Chapter 1. Introduction and Logic for Research Analysis

Veterans have experience that can be translated to educational credits. Veterans deserve the opportunity to access higher education. While higher education is set-up for access, translating military experience into educational credits is complex and difficult to navigate. Institutions of higher education often create a duplicative system for veterans transferring military credit that impacts their educational pathway. As one veteran shared, "I had a lot of technical training that probably should have converted into units that could be used to satisfy many courses, but the university only gave me general credits that go toward graduation. This really doesn't help me one bit. I even have a Joint Service Transcript [military transcript] that gives details about what topics were covered, but the school isn't looking at that (Respondent 2)." This dissertation examines the role of public higher education institutions in military transfer credit policy and public administration. The study asks, *how have major institutions of higher education formalized institutional policies and practices on awarding academic credit for military education?*

The GI Bill provides access to college for many veterans. However, once veterans access college and attempt to use previous credit, the experience becomes complicated. Veterans are entering public universities across the nation with military transfer credits that can serve as credit toward a degree. Military transfer credits are earned through most military training and education while in service, for example Basic Training. Credit is awarded on a case by case review by the university as general elective credits or department elective credit where applicable. Institutions of higher learning have autonomy in decisions to accept transfer credits. Institutional processes on how and when they accept credit is unclear. Institutions of higher education are then responsible for developing campus policy and administration of military transfer credit. The

development of policy and administration remains inconsistent and this impacts the experiences of veterans in institutions of higher learning. To understand the complexity of experience for veterans, this dissertation must first unpack the system in which the issue occurs.

The study uses Selznicks' lens of institutionalization for understanding organizational policy and administration to award military credits to veteran students. It must be noted there is a distinction between "organization" and "institution." The term "organization thus suggests a certain bareness, a lean, non-nonsense system of consciously co-ordinated activities (Barnard, 1938; Selznick, 1984)." This term uses an expendable tool, as a rational instrument engineered to do a job. "An 'institution,' on the other hand, is more nearly a natural product of social needs and pressures- a responsive, adaptive organism (Selznick, 1984)." Higher education is a product of social need – education – as a matter of analysis an institution. Complex "organizational structures in institutions of higher education can have unanticipated consequences for individuals needing individualized approaches for learning (Brown, 2010)." The lack of transparency in the technical requirements of earning a degree has significant impact on veterans' success (Richardson, Ruckert, & Marion, 2015) (United States. Congress. House. Committee on Veterans, 2012).

Military transfer credit policy serves as the context for this research, but institutionalization situates this research in the public administration literature. Examining public administrators through the lens of institutionalization is one approach to investigate California higher education institutions. Within institutionalization theory I will use four themes that Selznick draws upon as a toolbox for understanding the administration of military transfer credits. These themes are 1) the importance of informal organization vs. formal organization, 2) thick institutionalization, 3) character as distinctive competence and 4) barely institutionalized

(no formal roles or policy). Veteran success is impacted by repeating coursework and earning general elective credits, which impacts time towards degree completion. Public administrators lack knowledge on awarding military transfer credit due to a lack of formal institutions. To situate this dissertation's examination of military transfer credits, an investigation of the history of the public policy process, how the administration works, and the role of administrators at institutions provides an understanding for a gap in the literature.

Purpose of Research

Access to education is a right of military service. The military invests significant resources in the education of service men and women during their military services. Education can take many forms, such as basic training, language, professional development, or skill-based training. These investments in previous education experiences for veterans are the foundation of military service credits. Veterans rights to education has long-term support in government. Federal policymakers, therefore, have a continuing interest in understanding the ability of veteran students to transfer credits from military experience. Seventy-nine percent of student veterans using GI Bill benefits attend public schools. The remaining "21% split equally between non-profit private schools and proprietary or commonly called "for-profit" schools (National Center for PTSD, 2017)." While there is a common set of academic skills and professional competencies that veterans acquire, school policies diverge greatly.

Academic skills and professional competencies evaluation vary greatly according to individual campus policies and procedures. Inconsistent evaluation has significant impact on veterans' ability to successfully navigate and complete their degrees. For example, many of the problems with inconsistent evaluation lie in the American Council on Educations (ACE's) credit recommendations. Some campuses fully recognize the transcripts, particularly open-access

institutions or colleges that specialize in adult students. Others grant only partial credit, meaning not all credit counts toward a major or requirements for a degree. There are several colleges that do not accept ACE's credit recommendations at all (Fain, 2014). There are two main problems that occur when credits are not recommended. The first is taxpayers end up paying twice for veteran education -the training given veterans when they were serving – and that veterans often repeat coursework in college for longer than they planned, forcing them to retake courses that they often run out of GI Bill funds before they graduate. The second problematic area is repeating coursework slows down the pace that veterans are awarded a degree by their institution. Barrett Bogue, a vice president of Student Veterans of America states, "a few universities and colleges, and the military itself are slowly working to improve the process, 'a large portion,' of veterans remain unable to turn their experience and training into academic credit (Marcus, 2016a)."

Since 1944, the U.S. Government has used the GI Bill to retain and recruit a volunteer military service (Callaghan, 2008). For example, the GI Bill provides a financial path to higher education, but veterans are responsible for navigating admissions policies and procedures on college campuses and creating a plan of study with their college campus toward degree completion. "The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) required institutions participating in the Title IV student aid programs to disclose additional information about their policies surrounding the transfer of credit (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008)." The federal government's vested interest under the 2008 provisions is to disclose transfer of credit policies at institutions of higher education, but the problem remains in the grey area where institutions are given the authority on how credit is granted and in what amount. There are no set rules. "Some states have legislation that requires universities to accept those community college

transfer credits for military training, but most do not…it's really a disservice to the student if they have other goals to move on and they can't get that credit to go with them (Durosko, 2017)." The imprecise system creates a complicated process as universities and community colleges attempt to translate military experience into college credit. Often it becomes a matter of the higher education institutions willingness to research ways to find equivalent civilian academic courses or creating a standardized system ("Hastings' Law to streamline credit transfers for veterans signed into law today," 2017). Creating clear policy for students and institutions is important towards degree completion. Research shows degree earners increase the time enrolled toward a degree if they transfer prior learning credit (Hossler et al., 2012). The organization's natural history guides the study for how institutional values and mission are part of the role of policy and administration.

Research Questions

This project emerged by my observation of how veterans in higher education use resources on college campuses to try to provide faster paths toward graduation. The experiences of veterans in the institutions of higher learning where I work led to my focus area. I investigated the largest public higher education institution in the state of California and interviewed personnel at two public college and university campuses under that system. I studied the history of public administrators, staff, and/ faculty to learn how policy adapts to create veteran support services on college campuses.

The study sought to learn more from interviewing public administrators on campus, investigating formal records and/or historical data about the establishment of veteran resource centers on campus, and learning about faculty and staff support, or other formal policymaking to grant credit. To support these learning outcomes, I conducted semi-structured elite interviews

with campus administrative staff, support staff and veteran coordinators that make decisions to admit and administer military transfer credit. Ultimately, this research investigates the public policy and administration of awarding academic unit(s) for military transfer credit. The questions that arose from this study were: *Do institutional policies change based on staff and faculty administrative influence? How does the institution's history of policies and practices impact the current time to degree?*

There are multiple decision makers awarding prior learning credit at college campuses. In many cases, campuses award student veterans credit based on previous military education or work, which apply toward a degree or certificate. Campus administrators awarding transfer credit consider institutional rules and norms as part of the adaptation process. These decisions have an impact on veteran success related to coursework, academic standing, and degree completion. There are clear expectations for incoming freshmen and transfer students for a path to degree completion, but institutions have a lot of work to set clear and transparent policies for military transfer credit for veterans.

Research Design and Statement of the Problem

To understand more about the process of accepting military transfer credits, the study examines the policy process for accepting credit using the state of California higher education system as a guide. Participants shared information on the history, background, and current decision-making process for awarding military transfer credit. The study reviews publicly available information to learn more about the history and practices of military transfer credit at institutions of higher education.

According to a National Center for Education Statistics study, "students found an average loss of 13 units when transferring postsecondary credit, which is equivalent to a full semester of

coursework (Simone, 2014)." The 'why' and 'how' the loss of credit occurs lies in the grey area of institutional autonomy to award decisions. Another study by the "U.S. Department of Education's, National Center for Education Statistics, found that 35 percent of a sample of more than 18,000 students who began in the 2003-2004 academic year changed schools at least once. And nearly 40 percent didn't receive transfer credit, losing an average 27 credits apiece, or almost a full year of college (Marcus, 2014)." According to a study by RAND, "about 57 percent of survey respondents said they had attempted to transfer military credits to academic credits. Of those who had made such an attempt, 47 percent were satisfied with the result, and the average number of credits they transferred was 18." (Steele, Salcedo, & Coley, 2010) Colleges that wish to enhance student veteran success in significant ways also need to develop initiatives to support student veterans' transition into higher education (Kelley, Fox, & Smith, 2013). Additionally, many of the problems lie in ACE's credit recommendations. Some campuses fully recognize the transcripts, particularly open-access institutions or colleges that specialize in adult students. Others grant only partial credit, meaning not all credit counts toward a major or requirements for a degree. There are several colleges that do not accept ACE's credit recommendations at all (Fain, 2014).

Using a historical analysis allowed me to fill in gaps in my own understanding and confirm findings about past policies and practices at the campuses. After this, I completed interviews to confirm findings and analyzed the history and current practices to understand more about the impact of leaders on the definition and defense of an institutions' values, mission, and practices. By learning more about the decision-making process to grant military transfer credit, I seek to contribute to academic literature on institutionalization as a means of instilling value and

on the practice of higher education public administration routines and policy on postsecondary academic credit for student veterans.

Plan of Study

This dissertation is composed of seven chapters. In the introductory Chapter, I define the military transfer credit problem and possible solutions afforded by public higher education institutions. This context lays the groundwork for research and theoretical foundations that underpin this dissertation. Chapter 2 presents some of the existing institutional theory literature that helps establish the context that guided my research. This chapter identifies four themes used by Selznick that provide a lens for understanding policy and administration. The chapter then provides a review of the literature that identifies veteran benefits and the history of the GI Bill. This chapter discusses the legislative history, highlights changes and adaptations to the program, and provides an overview of Chapter 33, the GI Bill, including federal appropriations for benefits of the program. The connection between the GI Bill and institutions of higher learning offers insights to both the strengths and gaps in the partnership. Revealing the complexity of the relationship offers insights into the uneven application of military transfer credits. Institutions of higher education began their relationship with veterans after World War II with the inception of the GI Bill. This partnership created a pathway towards degree for many veterans, but with a growing influx of veterans in recent years and changes in both military transfer credit and degree requirements more policies need to be clearly defined for transparency between college administrators and student veterans.

Chapter 3 defines military transfer credit and the awarding of credit as a separate evaluation on college campuses and universities. This chapter presents why military transfer credit is essential in student veteran transfer policy. Additionally, the chapter provides definitions

and examples of military credit. Transfer credit is often confused by public administrators as a course that moves from one institution to their institution. The defining and explaining of military transfer credit demonstrates the impacts on student veterans and why administrators must decide if a credit is transferrable to their institution. This chapter frames the perspectives of campus administrators, faculty, registrars, articulation officers, and individuals handling student veteran administrative councils.

Chapter 4 provides background on the process necessary for me, as a researcher, to navigate policies and procedures to conduct research and interview administrators. The chapter describes the individuals I reached out to in the course of my research and incidents of miscommunication, either by result of nonresponsive individuals or well-intentioned but incorrect contact with individuals who did not process military credit. The information provides insight into the generalizable problem by highlighting that, in these cases, there are institutions lacking knowledge about their own campus capabilities.

Chapter 5 explains my research method and design. This chapter lays out an approach for studying institutions of higher education to learn more about the history of policies and practices. The methods and documents are explained for how I collected documents and information that provided a background for study. Chapter 6 presents findings from informants describing two cases with veteran articulation officers, offices of the registrar, faculty, and higher education administrators. This information helps answer my research questions, lends support to my stated problem, and offers guidance on organizational culture and public administration. When appropriate, I provide examples of histories of the public administration at the institutions such as initiatives by campus leadership that failed to offer change in military transfer credit policymaking as interview subjects noted. The history offers examples of policies and

institutional practices on campus that were previously in place that showed gaps in improvement. This chapter does this by looking at two cases for analysis. I offer findings by comparing the information offered by both campuses during the interviews to show any patterns of leadership and campuses modeling themselves after a similar institution's policymaking. Conclusions in Chapter 7 revisit the initial question of institutionalization and the role of leadership in public administration and policymaking for military transfer credit at institutions of higher education. I conclude with reviewing findings from public administrators on institutional norms, practices, and lessons learned for future policymaking. These seven chapters together reveal the complexity of military transfer credit and the impact on veterans. The chapter looks at what lessons may derive for both theory and practice as it relates to institutionalization on state campuses in general and specifically provide a more comprehensive understanding of how public administrators award credit to veterans at two California higher education institutions.

Chapter 2. Literature Review and GI Bill History

Policy setting: Relevant Literature and Gaps for Investigation

The American Council on Education (ACE) and Center for Education Attainment and Innovation state the challenges most institutions face with awarding credit for prior learning come from A. C. O. Education, Innovation, & California State University (2018). Transfer credit policy is "a complex issue between students and institutions of higher education. Even the word "transfer" itself is complicated; it identifies a broad range of opportunities to provide credit for learning eternal to the student's current institution (Officers, 2014)."

Today, students attend a variety of colleges and universities or enroll in institutions with multiple sources of learning. As a result, campus administration work with traditional and nontraditional education to meet enrollment needs of students. Admissions counselors, veteran service staff, faculty, Department Chairs, registrars, and campus leadership must manage academic standards that serve the educational goals of prospective students while maintaining the academic mission of their institution. This dissertation explores the challenges of institutional autonomy in setting policy for student veteran transfer credit. The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers point out one of the main problem's institutions face. "While most accrediting bodies—and participation in Title IV funding—require such a policy to exist, there have been no comprehensive recommendations about policy content, leading to a complex, inconsistent array of policies and procedures that lack in content and breath, or which benefit the institution more than the student (Officers, 2014). This lack of clarity in campus policies often create challenges for veterans navigating the process to transfer military credit. Additionally, policies that are not transparent create potential misunderstanding about the differences between credit applicability and transfer credit or credit towards degree. Transfer

credit requires "faculty engagement and development, capacity and resource development, information sharing, navigation processes and roles, and accreditation questions (A. C. o. Education, Innovation, & California State University, 2018)." Campus staff and faculty must determine credit and graduation requirements by a degree a student chooses, grade received, number of credits received, and content of the course, among other items. Leadership on campus provides an important role in navigating these complexities in military transfer credit policy to follow institutional norms and practices.

The research for this scholarship draws on institutional theory and legislative history and the policy process related to the GI Bill. The organization of the literature review is in two main sections. In the first section, I discuss some of existing institutional theory literature. I explain Selznick's institutional theory and the selection of four themes that were chosen to guide my research. There are many ways of interpreting institutions, but these fours lens were chosen as a method to begin to understand policy and administration at institutions of higher education.

In the second section, I present a history of the GI Bill, including a background on veterans and the political making of the GI Bill, the rise of veteran advocacy for veteran benefits, and the role of institutions of higher education and veterans. This background supports the public policy dialogue on veteran education benefits programs today. The history of the GI Bill program is relevant to understanding its relationship to legislation, which is still an adapting and evolving concept of American public policy and administration today. This history provides a background to understand further many of the conversations at colleges and institutions on how best to serve and meet veteran needs for higher education. Additionally, I review the history of the GI Bill legislative changes, including federal appropriations and increasing costs associated with growing numbers of veterans using the benefit program. The legislation is important since

the GI Bill is a term loosely used to identify different benefit programs, all which must be understood by campus administrators assisting with different benefit programs and transferring military credits at their institutions of higher education. In this section, defining key terms provide further clarity on Title 38, the U.S. GI Bill code, aiding the discussion of the different definitions of the benefits in institutions of higher education. Understanding the complexities of the GI Bill is necessary for public administrators at institutions of higher education as they provide a role in educational services for veterans on campus. Public administrators must interpret federal policy to provide veterans with support services on campuses, such as academic registration and counseling. The public actors participating in the articulation process must have a strong foundation in the GI Bill benefit program to make decisions to award credit. The section illustrates the wide range of benefits available under the umbrella of Title 38, GI Bill benefits, while also noting the unique criticism growing around the mistrust of marketing to veterans on college campuses to gain access to federal GI Bill funds, specifically as that marketing is related to for-profit institutions.

Lastly, I discuss institutions of higher education and the relationship with veterans. I discuss these literatures in the context of California, providing background for the dissertation's case studies. I note the demographics of veteran students and California's background in student veteran education and the support for GI Bill programs at the state's public institutions of higher education. These different streams of scholarly literature provide the context for this research and help to present the context, definitions, and challenges of public administrators to understand the higher education system.

Institutionalization: Selznick's Four Lens

This section identifies four themes used by Selznick that provide a lens for understanding policy and administration. The themes that are discussed are 1) formal vs. informal organization, 2) thick institutionalization, 3) character as distinctive competence, and 4) barely institutionalized. The first theme is formal vs. informal organization is a way of understanding administrative organization within higher education institutions. Selznick contributed to Weber's theory in 1942 by offering "an approach to a theory of bureaucracy," emphasizing that every organization generate informal structures and processes, in and around formal organizations. Organizations generate "an informal structure and particular ways of operating, as members are driven by their specific situations, problems, and needs, both operational and psychological, to make sense of what they do and work out ways of doing it. By these various processes the organization's official goals 'are modified (abandoned, deflected, or elaborated (Krygier, 2012).)"

Selznick's contributes to this study by looking at the relevance of informal structures that are often found within formal organizations. He defines "formal structures in the sense they represent rationally ordered instruments for the achievement of stated goals (Selznick, 1948)." This definition is important because he states, "organization," we are told, "is the arrangement of personnel for facilitating the accomplishment of some agreed purpose through the allocation of functions and responsibilities (Selznick, 1948)." An organization is both an economy and is it an adaptive social structure. As an economy relationship, more importantly leadership, are directed towards problems of legitimacy of authority and the dynamics of persuasion. His term of "to know the score," is one way of understanding the organizational process that makes it possible to interpret changes in the formal system – new appointments or rules or reorganizations- in their relation to the informal and unavowed ties to friendship, class loyalty, power cliques, or external

commitment (Selznick, 1948)." The lens of an informal organization will be used as a theoretical framework for understanding policy making. Within the informal organization, there is informal cooptation as a response to the interests of administrative constituencies. Selznick states, "cooptation reflects a state of tension between formal authority and social power. The former is embodied in a particular structure and leadership, but the latter has to do with subjective and objective factors which control the loyalties and potential manipulability of the community (Selznick, 1948)." Selznick viewed "informal groupings, attachments, rivalries, and so on, as a kind of residue of earlier times and forms yet to be purged from rationalistic organization and an inevitable complement of organizations (Krygier, 2012)." "Institutionalization is a process of creating reality, the relationship between the organization (internal pressures or energies) and the environment (external pressures or energies) becomes central (Selznick, 1948)." Selznick's understanding of institutional theory matures with time to define environment as "co-opted" by the organization. He defines it as, "the process of absorbing new elements into the leadership or policy-determining structure of an organization as a means of averting threats to its stability or existence (Selznick, 1948)."

The second theme used is what Selznick refers to as thick institutionalization (Selznick, 1994). A formal structure of organization must be established as a first step towards institutionalization. "Thick institutionalization takes place in many different ways. Familiar examples are: by sanctifying or otherwise hardening rules and procedures; by establishing strongly differentiated organizational units, which then develop vested interest and become centers of power; by creating administrative rituals, symbols, and ideologies; by intensifying 'purposiveness,' that is, commitment to unifying objectives; and by embedding the organization in a social environment (Selznick, 1994)." It is relevant to look at the informal structures that

take place when leadership does not create a thick institution. In cases where there isn't a formal structure, administration forms an informal system of policy and administration. Looking at Weber, there is a fundamental difference in the role and responsibilities of leaders and bureaucrats. The leader of a bureaucracy does not occupy a bureaucratic role- for the leader is concerned with goals; the bureaucrat with means. Leaders look outward, to what they might or should do in the world; they make policy. Bureaucrats assist leaders in doing so; they administer those policies. There are separate domains. The "leader leads but does not administer; the bureaucrat administers and is quite unsuited to lead (Krygier, 2012)." The lens of thick institutionalization is important in understanding more about the role of organization for creating a more transparent administration process.

The third theme is character as distinctive competence. Selznick's study of "the Tennessee Valley Authority examined the agricultural activities of the Authority that were in co-operation with the Extension Services of land-grant colleges (Selznick, 1949)." It is necessary to examine the commitment into organizations that impact 1) administration and 2) policy-making as a whole (Selznick, 1984). As Barnard points out, "formal organizations are necessarily "cooperative systems" that depend on both control and consent (1938)." The idea of "character" relates in this study to administrators that may be intimately related to commitments to personnel, practices, and group interest. It is relevant to study character in the case of institutions of higher education to learn more about distinctive competence or inadequacy that an organization has acquired through means of administration and potential impact of policymaking for veterans' services. Administrators committed to a specific purpose or community have been found to significantly affect programs or have external pressures that impact decisions (Selznick, 1984). People are not just roles but wholes complicates formal organization and control. While

delegation assigns powers and functions to role-incumbents, these are assumed by person with their own interests, priorities, needs, attachments, and goals. "As a result, individual personalities may resist the demands made upon them by the official conditions of delegation. In large organizations, deviations from the formal system tend to become institutionalized, so that "unwritten laws" and informal associations are established. Institutionalized rules and modes of informal cooperation are normally attempts by participants in the formal organization to control the group relations which form the environment of organizational decisions (Krygier, 2012)."

Later in Selznick's work, **The Moral Commitment**, institutions are found as mainly devices for mobilizing energies and achieving purposes. Selznick's theme of taking community as a model, must make a distinction between management and governance. He says that two functions, management and governance, coexist and interact. "The broader the organization's goals, the more leeway it has in defining its mission, the more requirements there are for winning cooperation, the more fully the lives of participants are lived within it, the more important does governance become (Selznick, 1994). This is true in the role of a large higher education institution since members of the organization are embedded in the community. Further, in institutions the role of individuals and leaders within the organization and its environment are important to understanding the concept of organizational culture. Institutionalism provides "a way of understanding a "social architecture" or culture believed to provide means of managerial control, as well as employee identification, loyalty, motivation, and coordination (Khademian, 2002)." The identify of shared meaning and value is an important identifier of organizational culture. Organizational culture is also present in this study when looking at character as distinctive competence, because it relates to the organization's underlying assumptions, values,

and beliefs, links to its administration and processes that form interpretive systems. The idea of character is a lens that is complex, but necessary.

The fourth theme used is barely institutionalized, meaning there is no formal organization. There is a lack of clear roles, policies, and administration. This theme is important to examine policymaking, because in some cases an organization cannot begin to define itself as an institution. To be a manager, means you must make decisions (March & Simon, 1981; March, Simon, & behavior, 1987). Decision making is complex. "Boundaries of rationality" create "complexities of the problems that individuals and organizations face because there are limits to a human's capacity for intelligent decisions. Rational behavior and response requires adaptive action when decisionmakers are faced with rational human choice (March et al., 1987)." Simon was "labeled as a positivist and relativist because, while he recognized that managers needed to have a strong moral code, he believed that social scientists should be in the business of evaluating and explaining processes rather than choosing among norms and values, other than widely shared democratic ones (Roberts & Wernstedt, 2019)." Further Mary Parker Follett suggests that "organizational structure, norms and values relating to the people, organizations, and time period are important parts of the decision process (Parker Follett, 1949)." Institutions adapt based on "effective leaders is one way of providing insight into how they define and defend the organization's institutional values and mission (Barnard, 1938)." Recent studies of universities, a familiar form of organized anarchy, suggest that such organizations can be viewed for some purposes as collections of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be an answer, and decision makers looking for work. These ideas are translated into an explicit computer simulation model of a garbage can decision process (Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972).

The general implications of such a model are described in terms of five major measures on the process. Possible applications of the model to more narrow predictions are illustrated by an examination of the model's predictions with respect to the effect of adversity on university decision making.

Institutionalization is defined in another way as "the emergence of orderly, stable, socially integrating patterns out of unstable, loosely organized, or narrowly technical activities" (Broom & Selznick, 1958). Institutions follow a fundamental but unarticulated reliance on history (i.e., the role of past events in current practices) that assumes processes motivate current practice (Bucheli & Wadhwani, 2013). This lens provides a way of looking at the cases in this study that considers the anarchy of decisions, roles, and administration may be "barely institutionalized." Looking at Weber, there is a fundamental difference in the role and responsibilities of leaders and bureaucrats. The leader of a bureaucracy does not occupy a bureaucratic role- for the leader is concerned with goals; the bureaucrat with means. Leaders look outward, to what they might or should do in the world; they make policy. Bureaucrats assist leaders in doing so; they administer those policies. There are separate domains. The leader "leads but does not administer; the bureaucrat administers and is quite unsuited to lead (Krygier, 2012)." Selznick gives us a lens for defining "organization" vs. "institution," which provides a specific set of areas to examine when looking at the role of the administrator. "To be an agent is to act purposively, and to do so on behalf of a principal or in the service of a goal or policy (Selznick, 1994)." In institutions that lack a clear function of management and governance there may not be a set of policies, division of responsibilities, or roles. Barnard (1938) suggests that "an organization that cannot accomplish its purpose will not survive and therefore has no reason to exist." Further, institutions are mainly devices for mobilizing energies and achieving purposes

(Selznick, 1994). These four themes provide tools for understanding institutionalization as a tool for understanding the administration of military transfer credit. However, an interesting gap for investigation is the GI Bill contribution for veterans and higher education. There are clearly defined policies at institutions for how the GI Bill is implemented, but when you go to military transfer credit there is a gap in the literature. The next section will provide a background on the GI Bill and the role of veterans and institutions of higher education.

History of Veteran Education Benefits

The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944—the GI Bill—passed late in Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR)'s presidency who viewed the "New Deal" for veterans (Altschuler & Blumin, 2009). The GI Bill shaped "the lives of veterans in postwar America and was a change in the legislative history of veterans' benefits laws that had followed all previous American wars (Altschuler & Blumin, 2009)." In the words of the American Legion, the original GI Bill is "often credited for spurring more than 50 years of economic prosperity across the nation (The American Legion, 2017a)." In 1944, the GI Bill provided veterans returning from overseas the opportunity for an education in a time when millions would have flooded the job market instead of going back to college had the government not funded their education. Examining the bill in political and institutional contexts is brings to light the narrative around the long history, which asks how do we or should we serve veterans?

Roosevelt's "New Deal" garnered national support as a connection between freedom from want and protection against external threats, captured in the notion of "freedom from fear." First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt supported the "New Deal" policy and ideas. "Eleanor was forever discussing how the world would look after the war, and finally her ideas took hold in the president's call for four freedoms in his State of the Union" (Sunstein, 2004). The vision for a

postwar America foundation began long before the end of World War II. The idea of adding to the bill of rights first emerged in a meeting in August 1939. In 1940, President Roosevelt recognized the need for postwar planning, creating the National Resources Planning Board (NRPB), which provided planning proposals for postwar demobilization, economic growth, urban services, transportation, land and water use, energy production, social services as a set of national goals, and included separate policies for veterans (Altschuler, 2009). The Osborn Committee was the second group authorized to provide recommendations on schooling and training. The primary objective of the committee was "to do what was necessary to overcome the educational shortages created by the war (Olson, 1974)." Both Eleanor and FDR emphasized America's commitment was rooted in an understanding of "things worth fighting for" (Sunstein, 2004). FDR identified the things as "the four freedoms in his State of the Union address on January 11, 1944.[1]" During the speech, he suggested the nation implement a second bill of rights,[2] stating, "It is our duty now to begin to lay the plans to determine the strategy for the winning of a lasting peace and the establishment of an American standard of living higher than ever before known" (Roosevelt, 1945). FDR's vision for a "Second Bill of Rights" promised a specific benefits package for veterans and promised to give citizens the right to a rewarding job,

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[1] The four freedoms: "the first is freedom of speech and expression-everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way-everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want-which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants-everywhere in the world. The fourth is freedom from fear-which, translated into world terms, means a worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor-anywhere in the world (Sunstein, 2004)."

[2] The Second Bill of Rights was also proposed in the State of the Union on January 11, 1944. "FDR shared every American is entitled to: the right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines of the nation; the right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation; the right of every farmer to raise and sell his products as a return which will give him and his family a decent living; the right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad; the right of every family to a decent home; the right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health; the right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident, and unemployment; the right to a good education (Sunstein, 2004)."

a living wage, a decent home, health care, education, and a pension—not as opportunities, not as privileges, not as goods, but as rights, guaranteed to every American. The GI Bill was viewed by many as the "Bill of Rights for G.I. Joe and Jane," providing compensation to servicemen of World War II for their lost time and opportunities, offering 16 million veterans a year of school or technical training for education that was interrupted by the draft or enlistment, an array of government-subsidized loans, and unemployment benefits (Hume, 2006). FDR wanted a way to prevent a repeat of the Bonus March of 1932, when 20,000 unemployed veterans and their families protested in Washington, D.C. Altschuler and Blumin (2009) point out Roosevelt was famously adept at sensing the direction and size of a political opening, while preserving other policy options. The GI Bill paved the way for veterans to gain an education and transition from a solider to a citizen.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) views the GI Bill "as one of the most significant pieces of legislation ever produced by the federal government—one that impacted the United States socially, economically and politically, but it almost never came to pass" (Veterans Benefits Administration). Journalist Tom Brokaw acknowledged a sentiment of respect and nostalgia for what he called, "the Greatest Generation" of young adults who fought to rescue the world from fascism and help return American society to peace and prosperity (Brokaw, 1998). With the focus and concern on finding an end to the war, Roosevelt attempted to unify the nation—those at home and those abroad—by connecting his desires for the nation to freedom from fear and freedom from want.

Politics and the Rise of Veteran Advocacy

Soldiers returning from military life to civilian life after the war were part of the larger motivation for Roosevelt and politicians supporting the GI Bill. "The members of the armed

forces have been compelled to make greater economic sacrifice and every other kind of sacrifice than the rest of us" (Roosevelt, 1945). Roosevelt made it clear that the treatment of veterans after WWII would be different than so many embittered veterans from WWI (Altschuler, 2009). Legionnaires' interest in the welfare of the World War II veterans arose in large part from a sincere desire to help prevent GIs from experiencing what they—the veterans of the Great War— had undergone (Ross, 1969). There were four main requests by the Legion. First, the Legion urged that benefits be centralized under one agency, the Veterans Administration—so that veterans would not be led from pillar to post; second, benefits for WWII veterans should be at least equal to those for their WWI counterparts; and third, any legislation should ensure that the returning servicemen could resume their civilian status right at the point at which the war had disrupted their lives (Ross, 1969).

The idea of providing education for veterans created discussion of a Second Bill of Rights and viewed as a way of preventing future Hitlerism forever. The fight for economic and political democracy became a policy topic about what was a freedom for all. Sunstein (2004) argues the policy discussion can be seen as a constitutional right versus constitutive commitment to provide educational benefits for veterans. He notes,

> It is more difficult to say whether the second bill has become part of the nation's constitute commitments. Very plausibly, the right to a good education has attained that status. No public official at the federal, state, or local level could reject that right as a matter of principle. Still, many American children do not receive a good education, and so it is unclear whether the right exists in practice. (Sunstein, 2004)

The policy discussion asking, "Is education owed to veterans for serving in the military" is a theme throughout the legislative history of the GI Bill. Educational attainment in the U.S. is

as an important component of the American Dream that should be accessible to all. There is an

intrinsic assumption that veterans returning from overseas are serving the public good (Bloom,

Hartley, & Rosovsky, 2007) (S. Mettler & Mettler, 2005). As a result, the public good is willing

to repay veteran service, through federal funding, granting higher education benefits. The

assumption that military veterans deserve higher education as a part of their compensation

creates a return on investment for military personnel serving. They receive a government service

in exchange for their time spent in uniform. As the dissertation discusses later, institutions of

higher education began to play a role in serving veterans, providing resources on campus and in

public life to help veterans gain an education to re-enter into civilian life (Suzanne Mettler,

2005a; S. Mettler & Mettler, 2005).

       As veterans began to return home from the war, advocacy for their needs began to grow.

Veterans were and still are as deserving of social benefits. Mettler (2005) points out that serving

was the "ultimate act of citizenship" (Suzanne Mettler, 2005b). To date, this is one of the few

social policies that brings both parties together. FDR stated on signing the GI Bill that "special

benefits are due to servicemen, who are entitled to definite action to help take care of their

special problems" (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs). Ross illustrates that disabled veterans

returning home were a clear reflection of the sacrifices for American freedom, and citizens on

the home front fully supported payment for veterans and a welcome home with educational

compensation (Ross, 1969).

       Bennet draws on two main political arguments used to promote the GI Bill: fear and

money (Bennett, 1996). The first political argument stemmed from fear, fear of another

depression, fear of what might happen to the country if the twelve million still serving in 1944

entered an economy that was already on the edge of bankruptcy at the end of the war (Bennett,

1996). The fear stemmed from the civilian transition, a swelling of the workforce, after World War I and that would impact the depleted economy (Nata, 2005).

In the case of the 1944 GI Bill legislation, FDR attempted to avoid a repeat of the Bonus March, which led to the eventual enactment of the GI Bill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs).[3] It is clear that in the period leading up to the GI Bill, was the big push the federal government needed to provide some sort of compensation to repay veteran service. The Bonus March, during May-July of 1932, created lasting tension and fear in the memories of legislators. By World War II, the idea of bonuses as compensation for soldiers was obsolete. During the Great Depression, many veterans found it difficult to make a living, which prompted Congress to pass the World War Adjusted Act of 1924. The act was commonly known as the Bonus Act, which provided a bonus based on the number of days served, although most veterans would not see a dime for 20 years (United States Congress, 1928; Veterans Benefits Administration).

The march demanded early payment of cash bonuses, owed to World War I veterans in 1945, as promised by Congress in exchange for their service. The Great Depression destroyed the economy, leaving many veterans homeless, jobless, and without resources (McElvaine, 1993). Fear of riots, violence, and panic grew as veterans camped on the national Mall. The Bonus March caused the federal government to turn on their own citizen veterans with force. General Douglas MacArthur and Major Dwight Eisenhower commanded cavalry, infantry, tank troops, and a gun squadron to disperse veterans and their families from their camp (The Library of Congress). Historians see the event as an unfortunate but necessary move by the government at the time. The Great Depression was used to justify the actions, which led to a depleted U.S. Federal Treasury. The government did not have the resources during the depression for the

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[3] However, at the conclusion of the initial program on July 25, 1956, veterans serving after this time were not beneficiaries of the educational program until legislation was amended (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs).

promised bonus compensation (Altschuler, 2009). This fear urged the legislature to find new policy solutions for veterans preparing for a postwar America.

The second major area of concern was money. Veterans were a powerful force to influence labor, big and small business, government, Congress, and the presidency. Veterans economic power threatened lawmakers. Eager to neutralize any responses, veteran benefits rose as a critical policy issue needing a solution. The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 established peacetime conscription and assured enlistees that their jobs would be held for them until they returned from military service (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 1940). The funding served the purpose of helping poor communities by providing support that allowed them to return to work to transition out of wartime depression. No one knew what the veterans would want when they came back home (Bennett, 1996). Big businesses and big labor unions were doing well in part due to wartime contracts, but those in the military were not making money. Hume points out, "the wartime economy boomed for civilians, enriching almost everyone else. While veterans earned one dollar a day in the trenches, war department employees received twelve dollars a day at their comfortable desks, federal civil servants pocketed $240 annual bonuses, assembly-line workers saw their wages double, and defense contractors received millions in government bonuses intended to spur production even as their profits broke all records" (Hume, 2006). Small business suffered as the influence of the dollar-a-year men, two thirds of all wartime contracts had gone to no more than one hundred firms. "Ten corporations got almost one third of government contracts; corporate profits rose from $6.4 billion in 1940 to $10.8 billion in 1944; and corporate assets almost doubled to $100 billion in the same period. During the same time, almost a half-million small businesses went bankrupt. The unions, however, profited from more dues as membership almost doubled" (Bennett, 1996). In 1944, the

original GI Bill legislation called for providing support to underserved communities, which included veteran populations.

A change was needed to provide incentives for joining military service, while making it affordable for the federal government. Pensions played heavily into the debate as well, but the idea of educating to help transition soldiers back into civilian life remained at the forefront (Humes, 2006). Education became a way to invest in a future workforce that would grow the U.S. national economy and provide soldiers the ability to become breadwinners in the home and independent of federal services. Additionally, the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944 provided preference for veterans, including widowed spouses and disabled veteran spouses, in employment where federal funds were authorized. Despite conscription, many veterans returning from war lacked civilian workforce skills needed for jobs. The nation needed veterans to come home and return to work to stabilize the economy. Creating independent civilians provided a way for their boots to remain in the home while their wallets invested in the economy.

In January of 1944, there were several different pieces of legislation regarding veterans' provisions making up what we now know as the GI Bill. The American Legion emerged as the primary advocate for veterans' benefits (Bennett, 1996). Ross points out, "the Legion's version of the bill would be modified in important particulars, it did have the merit of logical internal consistency. All the benefits revolved around the dual themes of centralization of administration and facilitation of veterans' readjustment to civilian life. Nothing in it—with the exception of the loan features—departed from ideas and plans already formulated by the Roosevelt Administration" (Ross, 1969). Support grew for underserved communities, including veteran populations, to lobby Congress to provide benefits to veterans as a way of transitioning out of wartime depression. The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and American Legion lobbied on

behalf of returning veterans for a public program that would provide benefits on their behalf (Stephen R. Ortiz, 2010). The administration of benefits was a point of contention for veteran advocacy groups. The Disabled Veterans of America (DAV) opposed the GI Bill throughout the bill's legislative history. The organization felt the Veterans Administration had its hands full with problems of the disabled and could not handle more responsibility (Ross, 1969).

Additionally, another part of the legislative argument was whether the Department of Education of Department of Veteran Affairs would be in charge of benefits. The bill almost died when Senate and House members were deadlocked on the unemployment provision. They both agreed on the education and home loan benefits, but many disagreed with the idea of paying unemployed veterans $20 a week. The public opinion was if they paid veterans unemployment it would diminish their incentive to look for work (Veterans Benefits Administration, 2013).

The original legislation was a plan created by the era's most powerful veterans organization, the American Legion (The American Legion, 2017a). The goal was to compensate the servicemen of World War II for their lost time and opportunities, offering 16 million veterans government-subsidized loans, unemployment benefits, and financial assistance for school or training for those whose education had been interrupted by the draft or enlistment, reinforcing the nickname of the program a "Bill of Rights for G.I. Joe and Jane" (Humes, 2006).

Congress passed the legislation and FDR signed the GI Bill into law on June 22, 1944. The legislation known commonly "as the GI Bill provided money for tuition, living expenses, books, supplies, and equipment for costs associated with higher education. The bill also provided low interest home and business loans to veterans (History.com Staff, 2009)." The process surrounding the original legislation occurred during a period of historic economic threat to the nation. The legislation passed during a period when individuals needed to become workforce-

ready through education to restore the economy. The political period around the legislation was necessary to avoid veteran conflict and public outcry.

By the time the legislation passed, both the House and Senate had proposed separate versions of the bill. Congress passed the legislation and FDR signed the GI Bill into law on June 22, 1944. The legislation provided for veterans through money for tuition, living expenses, books, supplies, and equipment for costs associated with higher education. The bill also provided low interest home and business loans to veterans. These measures served to address the political and economic concerns of the returning workforce of veterans.

Institutions of Higher Education and Veterans

By the spring of 1946, "300,000 World War II veterans had enrolled in many of the 2,268 universities, colleges, and junior colleges approved by the Veterans Administration as eligible for GI Bill reimbursement (Altschuler & Blumin, 2009)." By 1947, "2.3 million men and women had enrolled in colleges and universities; 1.15 million of them were veterans of World War II (Berman, 2015) (Altschuler & Blumin, 2009)." Military service and GI Bill benefits provided substantial gains in the collegiate achievements of World War II veterans (John Bound & Sarah Turner, 2002). Enrollments on college and universities campuses exploded during this time. The massive influx of veterans resulted in "changes at institutions of higher education—admissions, procedures, guidance and testing services, curriculum, pedagogy, and relationship to the government of American colleges and universities (Altschuler & Blumin, 2009)."

According to the VA, "79 percent of veterans who enrolled in a higher education program in 2016 were beneficiaries of the Post-9/11 program (Veterans Benefits Administration, 2016)." The subjects of this study are public schools. Public schools receive state funds and are nonprofit. This study examines institutionalism as a way of learning more about norms, rules,

and practices of campus administrators awarding military transfer credit thereby using GI Bill

funding toward degree attainment. How this relationship came to be is explained to clarify of the

role of institutional adaptation related to higher education and veterans.

Before the war, college and homeownership were, for the most part, unreachable dreams

for the average American. Thanks to the GI Bill, millions who would have flooded the job

market instead opted for education. By the time the original GI Bill ended on July 25, 1956, 7.8

million of 16 million World War II veterans had participated in an education or training program.

In the peak year of 1947, veterans accounted for 49 percent of college admissions. Upon signing

the legislation, President Roosevelt stated

> "This bill therefore and the former legislation provide the special benefits which are due
>
> to the members of our armed forces—for they 'have been compelled to make greater
>
> economic sacrifice and every other kind of sacrifice than the rest of us, and are entitled to
>
> definite action to help take care of their special problems'. (Franklin D. Roosevelt
>
> Library)"

Hume argues, "policy makers have not been nearly as generous with subsequent

generations of veterans for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is that the veterans' lobby

and veterans' vote, once a force with the power to make or break congressmen and the

presidents, has lost much of its unity and clout" (Hume, 2006).

The use of federal funds in colleges and universities.

The following section provides an overview of federal funding for the GI Bill and how

colleges and universities use these funds, historical background of the legislation, changes to

Title 38, and a synopsis of the program. In 2016, Time Magazine "reported a cost of $11 billion

a year in GI Bill benefits collectively spent at colleges and universities (Marcus, 2016)."

Colleges and universities actively recruit veterans to use GI Bill funding at their institutions. Barrett Bogue, vice president of Student Veterans of America states, "there's a large portion of that population that has military experience that has not been successfully applied for credit" (Marcus, 2016b). The dilemma is two part and taxpayers end up paying twice for veteran education. First, for the training given to veterans when they are serving and second in the added cost of veterans taking courses in college and using GI bill funding (Marcus, 2016b). Repeating coursework can lead to veterans running out of GI Bill funding before they graduate, forcing them to apply for loans or quit academic programs due to financial burdens. Coursework varies at institutions and provides both opportunities for learning and scholarship and supports funding academic institutions.

The chart below provides a synopsis of federal appropriations supporting veteran educational benefits, including the GI Bill. Since the "enactment of Chapter 33 in 2010, it is one the largest education program of the federal government. It is expected to reach 796,389 beneficiaries in 2018, accounting for 92 percent of federal appropriations for total training obligations. In 2017, Chapter 30 reflected just two percent of education funding. Chapter 35 represents four percent of education obligations. Lastly, Chapter 1060 and chapter 1607 account for one percent and less than one percent of funding in 2018 (Office of the Budget, 2017)."

Figure 1. Totals Reflect Estimated Obligations by Chapter of Training
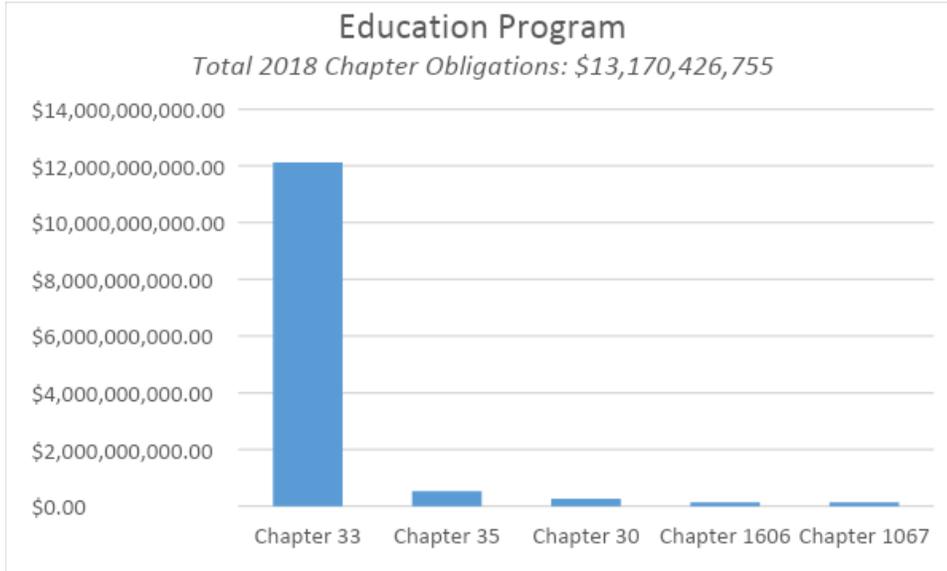
Source: (Office of the Budget, 2017)

In 2016, education benefit obligations of nearly "$12.7 billion provided benefits to 1,000,085 beneficiaries. Education obligations continued to increase, reaching $12.9 billion in 2017 and $13.2 billion in 2018 (Office of the Budget, 2017)." While the benefit programs provide eligible persons an *entitlement* to educational assistance. Most recipients "receive 26 months of full-time entitlement under the GI Bill programs (Veterans Benefits Administration, 2011)." This entitlement correlates to training time measured in dollars and/or time (months and days).

For students, it is important to note that the GI Bill is not Financial Aid. Veteran education benefits, including the Post 9/11 GI Bill, are considered an entitlement, much like Social Security (Mulhere, 2016). The receipt of veteran education benefits does not affect an individual's Expected Family Contribution on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Section 480(c)(2) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) defines veteran's education benefits (U. S. D. o. Education, 2002). These benefits are a resource and the FAFSA

recommends that veterans do not report their veteran education benefits as income (Kantrowitz, 2017).

The original GI Bill is considered successful in averting unemployment, raising the educational level and thus the productivity of the U.S. workforce, and confirming the value that Americans place on those that provide military service (Collins et al., 2014). "Men and women with a college degree earn 75 percent more than those without one do—a million dollars more in earnings over their lifetime. Funding federal entitlement programs increases employment thereby assisting economic growth (U S Congress, 2007)." Students are normally receiving GI Bill funds directly once they enroll. Institutions of higher education usually require a promissory note or application for student loans to pay them upfront. Students are then encouraged to pay for the loans with GI Bill payments. As a result, students are usually eligible for student loans, scholarships, and Pell Grants along with the GI Bill.[4] From "fiscal years 2009 through 2017, nearly $35 billion dollars in Post-9/11 GI Bill tuition and fee payments went to institutions across the United States, $5 billion in fiscal year 2017 alone (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2018)." Colleges and universities benefit financially from veterans and beneficiaries using GI Bill funding at their institutions. Veterans enrolling in institutions of higher education pay fees and tuition, which support institutional operations and educational programs on campus. For example, in 2017, "427 institutions charged taxpayers $1.4 billion in GI Bill benefits but spent less than 30% of gross tuition on instruction (Success, 2019).[5]"

While there are rules governing which postsecondary institutions may be approved to

receive GI Bill funds, no restrictions exist on how those institutions must allocate GI Bill

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[4] GI Bill benefits are not taxable to the user, but usually reduce the amount of student financial aid the student is eligible to receive (Howell, 2017).
[5] Education Department's definition in IPEDS tracks and reports each college's spending in several categories, including the category of "instruction.

revenue once they enroll a veteran. Nor are there any requirements that GI Bill funds or other federal student aid be spent serving the students they enroll. (Success, 2019).

Private Institutions and the GI Bill. The 2009 expansion increased veteran student enrollment at colleges. In 2014, Congress began to demand that the VA release its report on veterans' complaints against colleges (Glantz, 2014). Thousands of veterans filed formal complaints against colleges alleging a range of problems including deceptive marketing, fraud, and poor education. The exploitation of veterans by for-profit colleges became a cause for concern highlighted by the increasing amount of GI Bill funds used directly from Post 9/11 veterans. Institutions of higher education receive billions of taxpayer dollars through GI Bill funding. Aaron Glantz, from the Center for Investigative Reporting, stated in 2014, "These schools are set up to make money." The "Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP or Senate Health Committee), chaired by Senator Harkin (D-Iowa), launched a two-year investigation of the for-profit higher education industry. In 2012, the report from the Senate Health Committee hearings discussed the findings of recent years: poor graduation rates, high rates of student loan default and aggressive recruiting tactics targeting low-income students who are eligible for federal student aid and GI Bill funding (Senate Health, 2012)." For example, Senate Health Committee staff "reported 30 large companies that own for-profit colleges employed more than 35,000 recruiters yet had only about 3,500 employees working in career services and 12,400 working in student support (Kirkham, 2012; Fain, 2012)." Additionally, in 2015 and 2016, the closure of several colleges and universities, many for-profit, impacted student veterans (Powell, 2017).

In California alone, the Center for Investigative Reporting found nearly 300 schools banned from receiving state financial aid still received GI Bill money, even schools without

academic accreditation such as beauty schools, auto repair programs, and dog training

academies, together, more than $600 million (Woodruff, 2014). The University of Phoenix's San

Diego campus received more GI Bill money than the entire 10-campus University of California

System (Woodruff, 2014). The Senate Health Committee Majority staff report states,

> "Congress has failed to counterbalance investor demands for increased financial returns
>
> with requirements that hold companies accountable to taxpayers for providing quality
>
> education, support, and outcomes. Federal law and regulations currently do not align the
>
> incentives of for-profit colleges so that the colleges succeed financially when students
>
> succeed. (Senate Health, 2012)"

Policy Changes. The federal government made efforts to provide resources and

accountability to veterans using GI Bill funding at colleges and universities. President Obama

established Executive Order 13607: Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational

Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses and Other Family Members (The

White House, 2012). His administration developed principles to strengthen oversight,

enforcement, and accountability of education programs and to ensure service members have the

information they need to make informed decisions about attending and using GI Bill benefits at

institutions. For example, the VA created the GI Bill Comparison Tool, a website where veterans

can look up metrics such as the number of GI Bill veterans attending the institution and the

number of complaints veterans have filed against it (Veterans Benefits Administration, 2017).

The tool does not reveal the investigations or charges against colleges (Hefling, 2016).

Additionally, the Senate Health Committee report led to recommendations and policies,

including tighter rules governing for-profits in several areas including the tying of federal aid to

minimum student outcomes, lowering of the 90/10 threshold to 85 percent and the creation of an online student complaint clearinghouse (Fain, 2012).

The role of for-profit education created a conversation and continuing concern to learn more about how public funds through the GI Bill influence institutions of higher education. The for-profits provide an academic conversation about abusive marketing by the private companies that own these institutions while exploring the abuse of public funding. These conversations continue to ask the questions, "How have major institutions of higher education formalized institutional decisions on awarding academic credit for military education?" "Are these campuses influenced by public money, the GI Bill, spent at their institution?"

Legislative History: Title 38, United States Code— "GI Bill"

The following section is an overview of the chapters of Title 38, commonly known as the GI Bill. These chapters have experienced legislative changes over time (Dortch, 2012). This overview is a brief background meant to educate the reader on the program, history, and entitlements for veterans, families, and their dependents from its inception. Since the original World War II GI Bill, Congress has phased out each GI Bill by limiting the eligibility service period, establishing a final date for the receipt of program benefits, and/or limiting the period for individuals to receive benefits (Dortch, 2012). Over the decades during which the programs have been in existence, two themes have emerged. The benefits promote development of work-related skills to facilitate entry or reentry into the workforce and the base benefit is equitable regardless of rank or military occupation specialty. Educational assistance programs offered by the Department of Defense (DoD) target service members with specific skills or individuals. Title 38 of the United States Code pertains to veteran education programs. Within this, each program has its own Chapter in Title 38. As currently enacted, the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (MGIB-

AD), Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP), and Post-9/11 GI Bill programs are permanently authorized due to an unrestricted eligibility period, and Congress has not specified an end date after which no benefits would be paid (Dortch, 2012). See (Appendix A) for a Chronology of Educational Assistance Programs Administered by the VA.

Title 28 Legislative History

Prior to the Post-9/11 GI Bill, there were several other programs for veterans' education listed under the GI Bill program. On April 26, 2012, President Obama signed Executive Order 13607, directing the VA, the DoD, and the Department of Education to undertake a number of measures to "stop deceptive and misleading promotional efforts that target the GI Bill educational benefits of Servicemembers, Veterans, and eligible family members and survivors" (Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, 2012). The VA plans to use the trademark to enforce accountability of those that deceive student veterans for financial gain using deceptive marketing and recruitment (Price & Pompan, 2012). As of October 16, 2012, "GI Bill" is a federally registered trademark owned by the VA. The GI Bill is "defined as a service providing education benefits, namely, financial assistance such as accelerated payment and tuition assistance for institutions of higher learning, non-college degree programs, on-the-job training and apprenticeship training, flight training, independent training, distance learning and internet training, correspondence training, national testing programs, and co-op training to Veterans, Servicemembers, National Guard members, Selected Reserve members, and eligible dependents" (Federal Register, 2014). GI Bill refers to several different legislative initiatives that have changed over time to provide veterans education benefits following service. The original legislation is known officially as the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944.

The Veterans Readjustment Act of 1952, commonly known as the Korean Conflict GI Bill, passed through Congress on July 16, giving benefits for persons serving in the Armed Forces after June 27, 1950. It was signed into law by President Truman, becoming Public Law 550 (CQ Almanac, 1952). "Unfortunately, veterans of the Korean War found that the Veterans Adjustment Act changed how their benefits were paid. Instead of paying colleges and universities directly, veterans received a flat amount each month (about $110) to pay all their educational expenses" (Bisk Education, 2017). In 1952, the legislation shifted again to serve survivors and dependents in the War Orphans Educational Assistance Act of 1952. The legislation changed again to serve veterans with the Post-Korean Conflict and Vietnam Era GI Bill of 1966.

Chapter 30

In 1985, one of the most widely used programs up until the Post-9/11 legislation was the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty Department of Defense Authorization Act. The Montgomery GI Bill was "aimed at supporting a no-draft, all voluntary military force (Military.com, 2006)."

Before the Post-9/11 GI Bill was effective, the most popular program was the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (MGIB-AD). The "MGIB-AD provided a monthly allowance primarily to veterans and service members who entered active duty after June 30, 1985. The Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) provided a lower monthly allowance than the MGIB-AD to reservists who enlisted, re-enlisted, or extended an enlistment after June 30, 1985. The Reserves Educational Assistance Program (REAP) provided a monthly allowance that was higher than the MGIB-SR but lower than the MGIB-AD to reservists with active duty service (*GI Bills Enacted Prior to 2008 and Related Veterans' Educational Assistance Programs: A Primer*, 2017)."

All the educational assistance programs administered by the VA require some period of military service before benefits eligibility. The biggest ongoing conflicts have been related to how much eligible individuals should contribute to their education in time or money, which type of service warrants a benefit, and how liberal (i.e., valuable) the benefit should be. This ongoing debate is still occurring with proposals in Congress that might change legislation again to require service members to pay into GI Bill for benefits (Wentling, 2017). The Post-9/11 Bill was designed to provide individuals who served on active duty for 36 months and who are pursuing undergraduate studies at public colleges and universities with the full cost of attendance: tuition and fees, housing, books and supplies, tutorial and relocation assistance, and fees for testing and certification, as needed. Additionally, stipends for both housing and course enrollment supplies are included for full-time students paid directly to the individual, are non-taxable, and requires no receipts to the VA (Military.com, 2019). These changes to the GI Bill provide veterans with increased flexibility to attain their degree in person. Students have increased access to college by living on or near campus using allowance rates for housing based on location. These new changes and additional funding are intended to support veteran student degree outcome where prior versions of legislation fell short of giving enough financial support.

Chapter 31

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR & E) Department under the VA administers vocational rehabilitation. The program's purpose is to "assist veterans with service-connected disabilities and an employment handicap and transitioning service members participating in the Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) prepare for, or obtain employment (Administration, 2013)." The VA offers services to help with job training, employment accommodations, resume development, and job seeking skills coaching. Other

services are also provided upon need "to assist veterans in starting their own businesses or living services for those who are severely disabled and unable to work in a traditional environment (Administration, 2017)."

Chapter 32

The "Veterans Educational Assistance Program (VEAP) is for service members that entered for the first time between January 1, 1977 and June 30, 1985. The program is a benefit entitlement program that requires service members contribute from their active pay. The military matches contributions at a rate of two dollars for every one dollar contributed (Military.com, 2017)." Service members entitled to this government match program are eligible to set aside money from their active duty pay for training or higher education. VEAP benefits that were not used for training or higher education are eligible for refund for their part of the contribution. This program provided veterans a way of funding additional educational expenses that may not have been covered by GI Bill funding.

Chapter 33 (Post-9-11)

According to the Congressional Research Service, there were four main drivers for the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-252): providing parity of benefits for reservists and members of the regular Armed Forces, ensuring comprehensive educational benefits, meeting military recruiting goals, and improving military retention through transferability of benefits. The American Legion stated in 2008 that the operational GI Bill at the time was a "far cry from the original, having gradually lost value while the cost of higher education soared (The American Legion, 2017b)."

The stated purpose of the 9/11 authorization is to reward members of the Armed Forces for service on active duty since September 11, 2001, continue a history of offering educational

assistance to veterans, respond to the needs of the Armed Forces when not at peace, demonstrate the high esteem with which military service is held, recognize the difficult challenges involved in readjusting to civilian life after serving, and enhance the educational assistance benefits to those who serve on active duty after September 10, 2001. The program became effective August 1, 2009.

Since the recent changes to the public program, there has already been discussion of problems and possible enhancements to improve the program's implementation, administration, and benefits. In January, the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act of 2010 became law, making further changes and additions to the educational benefits. The bill amended Title 38, United States Code, to improve educational assistance for veterans who served in the Armed Forces after September 11, 2001, and for other purposes (*GI Bills Enacted Prior to 2008 and Related Veterans' Educational Assistance Programs: A Primer*, 2017).[6]

The transferability option under the Post 9/11 GI Bill allows Service members to transfer all or some unused benefits to their spouse or dependent children. Additionally, unused GI Bill benefits must be transferred to eligible dependents while serving as an active member of the Armed Forces. "The Harry W. Colmery Veterans Assistance Act of 2017 allows for designation and transfer of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to eligible dependents of the Veteran/Servicemember upon the death of the Servicemember or of a dependent who had unused transferred benefits (Congress, 2017)."

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[6] For example, one change provides the monthly living allowance (stipend) under VEAP for: (1) more than half-time study in pursuit of a degree; (2) pursuing a program of education in a foreign country; and (3) more than half-time study solely by distance learning; (4) a preparatory course for a test that is required or used for admission to an institution of higher education or a graduate school. In addition, a large change was to incorporate the definition of "active duty" for purposes for eligibility under the post-9/11 veterans educational assistance program (*GI Bills Enacted Prior to 2008 and Related Veterans' Educational Assistance Programs: A Primer*, 2017).

Chapter 35

Although the dissertation does not study survivor's and dependents GI Bill benefits, it should be noted that benefits are eligible for transfer in some cases. "The Survivors' and Dependents Educational Assistance Program (SDEAP) delivers education and training advantages to dependents from eligible resources to veterans who have a terminal illness due to a service-related condition, or who were called to active duty or had a disability related to serving in the American forces in the U.S. (*GI Bills Enacted Prior to 2008 and Related Veterans' Educational Assistance Programs: A Primer*, 2017)."

Chapter 1606

The "Montgomery GI Bill- Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) program is available for the Selected Reserve, including all military branch reserve components as well as the Army National Guard and Air National Guard. This benefit may be used for degree and certificate programs, flight training, and apprenticeship/on the job and correspondence courses (*GI Bills Enacted Prior to 2008 and Related Veterans' Educational Assistance Programs: A Primer*, 2017)."

Chapter 1607

The Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP) is available to all reservists who, after September 11, 2001, complete 90 days or more of active duty service "in support of contingency operations." This benefit provides reservists who return from active duty with up to 80% of the active duty GI Bill benefits as long as they remain active participants in the reserves. (Chapter 30). Passage of the program was "a direct reaction to the increased number and length of calls to active duty of reservists that occurred as a result of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq (Dortch, 2012)."

The legislation has adapted over time to include dependents and growth in increased college costs and has transformed to fit the requests of students who needed additional funds for certification and licensing exams. However, political decisions at the time of the program changes may have influenced many of these changes. The sentiment that our troops needed support upon return from wartime is a clear reference to the original legislation and has since carried through to modern politicians. Education benefits are one incentive now directly associated with military service in America.

Eligibility Criteria

When students must verify their enrollment status when they begin receiving benefits under the GI Bill. Students receiving Chapter 30, 1606, and 1607 benefits must verify their enrollment monthly via Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (WAVE) or Interactive Voice Response (IVR). The monthly verification of enrollment has not been added for "Chapter 33 and Chapter 35, with the exception that students with Chapter 35 benefits receive a monthly mailed verification form (VA Form 22-8979) (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2017)."

Eligibility criteria are complex. The following chart depicts a general snippet about eligibility criteria. Students are encouraged to file an application with the Regional Processing Office (RPO) that can determine if they are eligible and the conditions of their eligibility. The VA has three RPOs that handle GI Bill claims (Veterans Benefits Administration, 2018).

Figure 2. Comparison of Education Programs

	CH 33	CH 30	CH 35	CH 1606	C
ELIGIBILITY	Servicepersons who served on active duty for at least 90 aggregate days after 9/10/01	2 years active duty, 3 years active duty, or 2 years active duty plus 4 years reserves.	Veteran's death of permanent and total disability result of service.	Completion of initial active duty for training. Must be active reservist with 6-year obligation.	9 d c o C t
BENEFITS FOR INSERVICE STUDENT	Eligible after completing 90 days of aggregate service.	Payable after 2 years continuous active duty.	No	Yes	Y
ENTITLEMENT	36 months. May extend to end of term if expires during term.	36 months. May extend to end of term if expires during term.	45 months. No extensions except for child in special restorative training.	36 months. No extensions.	3 e
DELIMITING DATE	15 years from last discharge or separation.	10 years from last discharge or separation. May extend for later period of active duty or disability that prevents completion of program.	Child: 8 years. Spouse: 10 years. 20 years if vet rated permanent and total within 3 years of discharge. Surviving spouse: 10 years. 20 years if death while on active duty. Eligibility rules are complex and should clarify their letter and by calling the VA.	14 years from beginning date or eligibility, or on the day left the Selected Reserve. May extend if disability incurred or aggravated by service in selected reserve prevents completion of program.	1 s s c o i 1 1 s

Source: (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2017, Veterans Benefits Administration, 2017)

Today, the Post-9/11 GI Bill has increased the number of veterans on college and university campuses thereby expanding the intersection of public administration at institutions of higher education to administer military transfer credit. Due to the increase of military student attendance, it is important to have a stronger understanding of military transfer credit and the role of the institution in shaping degree attainment. "In the first six years, the Post-9/11 GI Bill has funded nearly 450,000 post-secondary degrees or certificates and—at current funding levels— will pay for approximately 100,000 degrees each subsequent year." The National Veteran Education Success Tracker (NVEST) Project demonstrates that today's student veterans, using the Post-9/11 GI Bill, perform better than their peers and that federal investment in higher education through this program is producing demonstrable results. Through analyzing nearly one million individual veteran records, the "NVEST Project demonstrates that student veterans using the Post-9/11 GI Bill are more likely to graduate. Student veterans prefer to attend public or nonprofit schools while seeking academically rigorous degrees in the fields of business, the health professions, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (Cate, Lyon, Schmeling, & Bogue, 2017)."

The most recent "2008 Post-9/11 GI Bill grew from concerns for veterans serving after 9/11 returning from home without funds for higher education that would pay for the increased cost of higher education (Norton, 2016)." Much like the original GI Bill, today colleges and universities are still struggling to meet the challenges of increased veterans on campus. Congress' reauthorization of the GI Bill increased benefits to meet higher education costs as well as changes such as transferring benefits as a way of attracting and retaining a volunteer military force. As college campuses navigate veteran enrollment, institutional practices for awarding academic credit for experience, training, or education in the armed services continues to be an

experiment with an uncertain outcome. Chapter 3 gives an overview of military transfer credits

and the public policy practices of institutions of higher education.

Chapter 3. Military Transfer Credits History and Context

In 1946, the GI Bill was an experiment to meet the increased student population on college campuses. Most institutions supported GIs in attaining their degree. They ran short courses and sessions and used the quarter system (Altschuler & Blumin, 2009).

The American Council on Education (ACE) invested at an early stage of the political discussion to protect higher educational institutional interests and was one of several institutions that testified during the initial education committee hearings in 1943 on veteran eligibility for education benefits. Institutions of higher education saw the GI Bill as an opportunity that would greatly increase the number of potential students (Bennett, 1996). Dr. George Zook, the president of ACE, representing college presidents, made it clear that educational institutions should select students, under regulations formulated by the Office of Education, and the protection of institutional interests to make decisions on student affairs remain autonomous (Bennett, 1996). Institutions of higher education protected their autonomy to admit veteran students on campuses.

Transfer Credit in the state of California

This study examines the state of California as one study for understanding the role of institutions, specifically public institutions of higher education, and the role of public administrators, in awarding military transfer credit. The state of California offers the largest public higher education institutional system in the country, including three different public school systems—the University of California (UC) hosting 10 universities, California State University (CSU) hosting 23 campuses, and California Community Colleges (CCC) hosting 110 campuses (Veterans Resources, 2017). Public administrators interpret policy decisions in compliance with applicable national, state, Title V, institutional systemwide office, and university policies and procedures.

To understand the decision-making process of public administrators, it is necessary to understand the four areas where veterans can apply for transfer credit. The first area is transfer credit from accredited colleges and universities. Students generally are granted transfer credit for baccalaureate-level courses successfully completed at regionally accredited colleges and universities. The review of transfer credit occurs through the Office of Enrollment Services in compliance with applicable national, state, institutional higher education system, and campus policies. Initial admission eligibility determination is based upon undergraduate degree applicants' self-reported college coursework submitted through a campus online database that may be eligible for transfer (Chancellor, 2018). The second area is college-level examination program (CLEP). Test Credit may be awarded for AP, IB, CLEP or other exams noted on the college transcript as coursework, which allows students to apply the credit toward eligible General Education (GE) requirements. The third area is the DD214 separation document and Joint Services Transcript (JST) in the Documents area of the application. It is important to note that credit awarded for military service and training is not entered under the self-reported online database. Campuses review the documentation separately on each campus and request official copies later in the admission process if needed (Chancellor, 2018). The fourth and last area is transfer credit from overseas institutions. Applicants are not able to designate GE credit for international credits (The California State University, 2016).

In California, Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer, ASSIST, is the official repository of articulation for California's public colleges and universities and provides information about student transfer in California. ASSIST uses an online student-transfer information system that shows how course credits earned at one public California college or university apply when transferred to another. The admitting institution grants the

student transfer. ASSIST does not make formal decisions on transfer credit (Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer, 2017b). The ASSIST program determines course transferability at the California institutions of higher education and may indicate campus transfer eligibility (Chancellor, 2018). Such a system does not exist for military transfer credit in California's institutions of public higher education.

Unit limitations apply to the transfer of credit across the state of California. The following are the limitations used to meet baccalaureate degree requirements:

- A maximum of 24 hours of any combination of correspondence, extension, and non-traditional courses, e.g. DANTES.

- A maximum of 30 hours of examination credit.

- A maximum of 70 hours may be transferred from two-year colleges (The California State University, 2016).

Nationally, student veterans follow a specific process for admission to an institution of higher education. The process is different from a civilian applicant due to the nature of military transfer credits. This dissertation focuses on military transfer credit, which is a separate credit only available to student veterans and the following sections gives some common definitions (transferable course, articulated course, and prior learning credit) used in the higher education community literature. There are important differences between a transferable course and an articulated course. However, to common use of the terms interchangeably leads to a lack of clarity in how credits apply to degree completion.

Transferable courses

- A transferable course is a course taken at one college or university that can fulfill unit credit at another institution. This does not indicate how the course can fulfill a subject matter requirement at a university campus.

- A course that is California State University (CSU) transferable (or Baccalaureate level) can fulfill unit credit at any California State University campus. The community college that offers the course determines transferability to CSU.

- A course that is University of California (UC) transferable is accepted for credit at any University of California campus. The University of California Office of the President determines if a course is UC transferable.

Articulated Courses

Institutions are responsible for awarding credit for any prior experience or coursework that qualifies for acceptance at an institution of higher education, known as articulated credits.

- An articulated course is a course taken at one college or university that can satisfy subject matter requirements (major or general education) at another institution. With a handful of exceptions, all articulated courses must first be transferable. It is important to remember, however, that not all transferable courses are articulated (Articulation System Stimulating Interinstitutional Student Transfer, 2017a).

Transferring credit does not necessarily define the incoming student as a "transfer student." A transfer student is previously "enrolled in a regular session (fall, winter, or spring) at a college or university after high school. Taking a class or two during the summer term immediately following high school graduation doesn't make you a transfer student (Admissions, 2017)." Veterans can transfer in both military and postsecondary credit, known generally as a credit transfer. This section outlines the requirements for applying for admission and submitting

records for review for articulation for military transfer credit. Institutions follow the same process for submitting credit for review, but institutions determine decisions on credit acceptance and the process of evaluation.

Multiple public administrators apply and award prior learning credit on college campuses. Administrators include, but are not limited to, faculty, academic senate, Department Chairs, registrars, support staff, campus Presidents, student work-study staff, and more. Clear policy and communication for students receiving information on steps toward transfer and the institution receiving and processing credits require multiple administrative steps. In particular, faculty engagement is important at institutions because they often review credit as transferable towards a degree in their respective department. In many cases, campuses award student veterans credit based on previous military education or work, applied toward a degree or certificate. Institutional rules and norms are considered a part of the adaptation process for campus administrators awarding transfer credit. These decisions have an impact on the outcome of veteran success related to coursework, academic standing, and degree completion.

Definition of Credit for Prior Learning & Major Problems

What *is credit for prior learning* (CPL)? The study uses two definitions established by ACE, Center for Education Attainment & Innovation, and The California State University, Office of the Chancellor. The two definitions are: 1) "a set of well-established researched and validated methods for assessing non-collegiate learning for college credit" and 2) "a process that allows learners to demonstrate knowledge and skill in a particular field or fields and have that learning evaluated for college credit" (A. C. o. Education et al., 2018).

In 2016, the Chancellor's Office identified the main problems that campuses faced awarding credit for prior learning related to military transfer credit. The problems were identified through a survey of all the campuses (O'Rourke, 2016). The problems included:

- Military prior learning does not match major discipline fields

- Most military credit is issued as an elective

- Credit articulation does not occur

- Transfer credit caps can occur at 150 credits, preventing the full transfer of credit

- Some military or veteran students do not submit their Joint Service Transcripts (JSTs) or submit them late in their term

- There are many military occupations to research and a variety of credits, thus impacting how credits are assigned to meet requirements

- ACE credit recommendations are very general, making it difficult for the campus to assign major discipline credit

In addition to these recommendations, the military transfer credit is included in the Transfer Student Bill of Rights, which includes the basic rights of all transfer students[7]. Institutions of higher education should reference the four main rights when creating transfer policies on campus. Referencing these rights would provide campus leadership with stronger communication and transparency for both students and institutions of higher education. The main rights are 1) students have the right to clearly know how credits transfer. "Colleges and universities use jargon and other professional language that students do not understand (Officers, 2014)." Students applying will understand how and if their military credit is transferable. This

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[7] The Transfer Bill of Rights was developed from research authored by the American Council on Education, the Council on Higher Education Accreditation, and The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers based on examining issues in which students earn and transfer credit.

benefits the institution because students will understand policies and prevents them from enrolling in duplicate coursework and allows prospective students to gain knowledge about transferring to degree programs. The second area states, "institutions should develop policies that help prepare students for the transition (Officers, 2014)." A weak or grey transfer credit policy does not favor the institution since it ineffectively prepares the student for curriculum and degree requirements. The demands of the institution must be fairly represented and prepare students for requirements toward degree. Having a policy that constantly changes or is unclear may be unfair for students and damage the institution's reputation. The third area states, "both institutions and students have responsibilities in the transfer process (Officers, 2014)." Transfer students must be made aware of paperwork, policies, and materials needed in order to apply credit. "For the institution, the policy should provide clear rules to govern, and protect, what credit is accepted, how it is applied, and how those decisions were reached (Officers, 2014)." Last, "transfer credit policies should reflect the mission and goals of the institution (Officers, 2014)." Students will inevitably transfer credit from other institutions. By providing clear policy that students can see and understand they will also increase visibility of the process for prospective students. Public accountability for institutions awarding degrees is important for graduation completion.

Case Study Institutional Systemwide Policy

The institution included in this study defines credit for formal instruction in non-collegiate settings by Executive Order 1036. Executive Order 1036 is issued pursuant to the state of California, Title V, California Code of Regulations, Sections 40100 and 40102; and Section II (a) of the Standing Orders of the Board of Trustees of the Institutional System, which determines "presidents of the (Institutional Systemwide) campuses or their designees may apply toward

admission eligibility and/or the baccalaureate degree, credit earned from 1) examinations, 2) learning, skills, and knowledge acquired through experience, and 3) non-collegiate instruction" (Reed, 2008). Students shall be granted credit toward admission eligibility and toward the baccalaureate degree for the following types of formal instruction in non-collegiate settings:

- Completion of formal instruction in non-collegiate settings, (either civilian or military) as recommended by the ACE publication Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services.

- Lower-division baccalaureate degree courses are comparable to courses to courses offered on most (Institutional systemwide) campuses. (Credit should not be allowed for occupationally oriented courses designed to enable a student to function only as a technician.)

- Upper-division baccalaureate degree credit courses.

- Graduate degree credit courses (Azepitia & O'Rourke, 2017).

Veterans and service members have a variety of ways to earn credit for their military training and experience. Prior learning assessment (PLA) combines several ways for students entering a college or university to receive credit, but the focus of this study is on credit for military training and experience. ACE provides guidelines for how military transfer credits are reviewed and recommendations to institutions of higher education to make decisions on awarding credit at a specific college or university (American Council on Education, 2017c).

The Council for Adult and Exceptional Learning points out that a lot of institutions do not have a formal written policy available to students (Haynie, 2014). In many cases, students are unaware that military experience is available to apply to undergraduate or graduate study. Credit

transfer policies vary by state and institution (Levine, 2014). Student veterans need to inquire about policies with the institution reviewing their military transfer credit.

Applying to College: How It Works

The following section explains how it works when a veteran applies to an institution of higher education including the application, acceptance, and steps made to begin the process of reviewing transfer credit for a plan of study. To gain admission to the university, the veteran follows the same application guidelines as non-veteran students. Acceptance follows admission standards, including submitting evidence of a high school diploma, GED certificate, or an international equivalent. Prospective students complete an application for admission and indicate whether they will pursue a bachelor's degree and choose an academic degree program, a certificate program, or take general education courses.

The prospective student veteran follows this procedure: 1) apply to institution of higher education, 2) complete enrollment process, 3) request transfer credit evaluation and 4) participate in the creation of a degree plan admitted to the institution of higher education. Once admitted, the applicant participants in an administrative credit evaluation.

Figure 3. Military Transfer Applicant Process

Military Transfer Applicants:	Application Process:
● Can transfer previous college credit ● Can transfer military training and experience	1) apply to institution of higher education, 2) complete enrollment process, 3) request transfer credit evaluation, 4) participate in the creation of degree plan admitted to the institution of higher

	education. Once admitted, the applicant is accepted to an administrative credit evaluation.

Source: (Admissions, 2017)

Admissions representative contacts the prospective student to inform the applicant about their acceptance and enrollment process. The student then agrees to attend an institution of higher education. During the enrollment process, the admissions representative collects essential documents, including transcripts for credit transfer, enrollment agreement, military service forms, and payment method.

As soon as the prospective student veteran has completed the application requirements, the information goes to the Office of the Registrar for credit evaluation. An official transcript, in the form of the JST and a DD Form 214, must be sent to the admitted institution of higher education directly from the institution or military branch where the credit was earned. The DoD issues a DD214 upon a military service member's retirement, separation, or discharge from active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, presenting data for the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Coast Guard. The official JST transcript is owned by the service member's or veteran's specific service and sealed from the originating institution or sent officially electronically (American Council on Education, 2017a). Each branch of the military assesses all transferable course work differently. The institution uses the military assessment to generate a degree or course of study plan. Campuses can refer to the recommendations for credit from ACE. However, each college can accept, modify or request the guidelines provided from the military transfer credit guide.

Once transcripts are evaluated, transfer credit is matriculated to the selected program. Students have a degree plan that shows the credits transferred, along with the remaining courses required to graduate. Students use this degree plan during their time at an institution of higher education to complete necessary coursework.

Credit transfer refers to the recognition of credits earned at a prior institution of higher education by a second (or subsequent) institution of attendance that are applied toward a degree or certificate (Sean Anthony Simone, 2014). Unless stated, non-course credits (e.g., Advanced Placement exams, credits awarded for experience in the workforce, credits awarded for examination) are not included in credit transfers (S.A Simone, 2014; Sean Anthony Simone, 2014). This dissertation defined the differences for veteran transfer credit and focused on CPL for military transfer credits.

Federal Oversight

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to education in the U.S. and other nations. This entity fulfills a "congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report full and complete statistics on the condition of education in the United States; conduct and publish reports and specialized analyses of the meaning and significance of such statistics; assist state and local education agencies in improving their statistical systems; and review and report on education activities in foreign countries" ("National Center for Education Statistics," 2017). The study identifies credit transfer opportunities according to the same standards and definition used by the NCES. According to NCES, "a transfer can be defined by either the movement of students or the movement of credits from one institution to another institution." This is a potential transfer credit opportunity from one institution to another as a result of multi-institutional attendance. Potential

transfer opportunities are identified using beginning and end dates of attendance at each

institution to determine the sequential order of attendance (Sean Anthony Simone, 2014).

The "American Council for Education (ACE) presents recommendations for prior

learning credit transfer for formal courses and occupations offered by all branches of the

military. In 1942, ACE founded a special committee to develop policies for evaluating military

education experiences. Following that study, the Guide to the Evaluation of Educational

Experiences in the Armed Services (the Guide) was published in 1944 and credit evaluation of

military occupation reviews started in 1974 (A. C. o. Education et al., 2018)." All

recommendations are based on "ACE reviews conducted by college and university faculty

members who are actively teaching in the areas they review (A. C. f. Education)." ACE credit

recommendations appear on the service member's JST. The transcript is a recommendation for

the institution reviewing credit transfer. The decision to admit the veteran and accept military

transfer credits lies with the institution ("Higher Education Opportunity Act," 2008).

Three Ways Military Transfer Credit is Awarded

Across the nation, institutions of higher education award veteran students' college credit

for experience and/or military training. This includes military classroom learning, "defined in

Title V of the state of California, Office of the Chancellor Executive Order 1036 as formal

instruction in a non-collegiate setting (Azepitia & O'Rourke, 2017)." Institutions of higher

education complete a separate articulation process and the veteran's credit appears on the JST.

As previously reviewed, classroom learning at an institution is viewed as a prior learning credit

and receives a different transcript.

The Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) helps service

members and veterans pursue their educational goals and earn degrees or certifications both

during and after service ("Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) "). The JST Operations Center recommends that veterans send an official copy of a JST as a part of their academic record when applying to colleges and universities. The JST is an academically accepted document to validate a service member's military occupational experience and training along with the corresponding ACE college credit recommendations. Additionally, the JST Operations Center provides transcripts online to soldiers with a turnaround of 24 hours for delivery to colleges and universities ("Joint Services Transcript Brochure,"). During service members' Transition Assistance Program (TAP), they can receive a Verification of Military Education and Training (VMET) document, DD Form 2586, which provides descriptive summaries of their military work experience, training history, and language proficiencies. The VMET does not replace formal military transcripts but is an additional tool to support service members and veterans with transition (American Council on Education, 2017b). Colleges and universities make decisions to award credit and accept recommendations from ACE. Many of these decisions depend on institutional policies and procedures for transfer credit, the student's program of study, and degree requirements ("College Credit for Military Experience,").

Veterans and service members have a variety of ways to earn credit for their military experience. There are three common methods by which service members receive credit for military experience: 1) The JST, 2) Credit by exam, and 3) Portfolio assessment. Final decisions to award credit are made by the college or university (Haynie, 2014).

The Joint Services Transcript

Soldiers applying for military transfer credit request the required official transcript, sent to their campus which is called a Joint Service Transcript (JST). The transcript includes consolidated information for the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Coast Guard. All service

members complete courses based on their occupation, which serve as part of their training. Each branch of service is assigned its own course number based on which military service owns the course, which appears as a specific course ID number on the JST (American Council on Education, 2017b). The only separate distinction is The Community College of the Air Force, which issues its own transcript.

The JST identifies course ID numbers, which assist colleges and universities with awarding credit for military service. The documentation provides public administrators on campus with an official computerized transcript, which includes each military education and job experience with descriptions and college credit recommendations provided by ACE. An official transcript includes name and SSN as well as the following information:

- Current or highest enlisted rank

- Military status (active or inactive)

- Additional Skill Identifiers (ASI) and Skill Qualification Identifiers (SQI)

- Formal military courses

- Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) held

- Standardized test score descriptions and credit recommendations developed by ACE ("JST Transcripts,")

- Institutional Review of JST

All branches of the military provide transcripts, processed through the ACE Registry Transcript System (AARTS). AARTS is a computerized transcript system that produces official transcripts for eligible soldiers. The transcript combines a soldier's military education and job experience with descriptions and college credit recommendations developed by ACE (Army, 2016). Additionally, the JST is also used by Credentialing & State Licensing agencies and

potential employers in assessing military training, education, and experience ("JOINT

SERVICES TRANSCRIPT "). The JST Operations Center manages official requests and

provides this service free of charge for all applicants ("Joint Services Transcript Brochure,").

Soldiers are required to register for an official transcript through the JST website and can obtain

an unofficial copy for their own review ("JST Transcripts,"). The JST Operations Center

recommends that veterans send an official copy of the JST as a part of their academic record.[8]

All service members take courses based on their occupation, which consist of a set

curriculum with measurable outcomes, rubrics, and validated student assessment instruments.

Courses may include lecture, small group work, case studies, skills lab, clinical, practical

exercises, computer-based delivery, and discussion boards (American Council on Education,

2017b). For example, all U.S. soldiers go through a basic recruit training course as they enter the

military. The military offers two distinct training programs, the enlisted personnel recruit training

and officer candidate school. The main difference between these programs is education. Officers

commonly possess 4-year degrees or education that may include coursework from an institution

of higher education. Usually, enlisted service members do not have an undergraduate degree

before they enter service.

The JST originates by the service member's or veteran's specific service, which provides

each service's seal at the top of the transcript. Military transfer credits are consolidated as a

transcript for college administrators to evaluate as potential credits awarded at the applicants'

institutions of higher education. The problem the veteran population faces are whether the

college or university administration has policies in place that review their military training and

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[8] According to ACE, JSTs are accepted by more than 2,300 colleges and universities ("Joint Services Transcript Brochure,"). JSTs are organized in eight sections: 1) Unique Service Seal, 2) Personal Service Member Data, 3) Military Courses, 4) Military Experience (Occupations), 5) College Level Test Scores, 6) Other Learning Experiences, 7) Summary, and 8) Academic Institution Courses ("Joint Services Transcript Brochure,").

experience as units of study toward their degree or as an elective credit (McGrath, 1944;

Medsker, 1946). The JST is an academically accepted document to validate a service member's

military occupational experience and training along with the corresponding ACE college credit

recommendations. The JST Operations Center eliminates the need for DD Form 295 and

provides free transcripts online to soldiers with a turnaround of 24 hours to colleges and

universities ("Joint Services Transcript Brochure,"). Colleges and universities then make

decisions to award credit and accept recommendations from ACE. Many of these decisions

depend on institutional policies and procedures for transfer credit, the student's program of

study, and degree requirements ("College Credit for Military Experience,"). Figure 4 provides an

example of a joint service transcript. This is what college campuses receive in order to grant

credit at their institution from a student transfer.

Figure 4. Joint Services Transcript Example

JOINT SERVICES TRANSCRIPT EXAMPLE

UNOFFICIAL

NAME: ONESLOCKER, DAVY TEST   Transcript Sent To:

SSN: XXX-XX-XXXX   JONESLOCKER, DAVY TEST

Rank: Chief Electronics Technician (E7)

Status: Active

Source: (American Council on Education, 2017a)

This section presents ACE credit recommendations for the courses that the service

member or veteran has completed (Figure 5). Key things to note include the military course ID

number in the far-left margin, the ACE identifier in bold text to the right, and the attendance

dates for the coursework. The credit recommendations are listed as subject-area bullets with the

semester hours (SH) and level of the credit (V=vocational, L=lower, U=upper, and G=graduate) aligned to the right. At the end of the credit recommendation, two sets of dates appear in parentheses (mm/yy). The first date indicates when an ACE faculty evaluation team conducted the hands-on review. The second date indicates any administrative adjustment to the course data. Additional data listed in the Guide includes course length, version, and related competencies or learning outcomes connected to each subject area (American Council on Education, 2017a).

Example 1. Military Course Completions:

Figure 5. Military Course Completion Transcript

Source: (University, 2017)

This section highlights the occupations the service member has held, including occupation designators, titles, descriptions, and the date the service member attained the occupation. Evaluated occupations include an ACE ID number and ACE credit recommendation. An occupation refers to the service member's job while in the military. The ACE occupation review process focuses on the recommendation of credit for learning that occurs on the job,

above and beyond the formal classroom training. The evaluation of an occupation is more experiential in nature and is an assessment of the profession of the service member, determining what learning has occurred beyond formal military training (American Council on Education, 2017a). For Army occupations, the status (primary, duty, secondary) appears next to the occupation designator. For Marine Corps occupations, the pay-grade alignment to the credit recommendation is noted in parentheses. Additional data listed in the Guide may include related competencies or learning outcomes connected to each subject area (American Council on Education, 2017a).

Figure 6. Example Military Experience Occupations

ONESLOCKER, DAVY TEST			Page 6 of 16
		Military Experience	
Occupation ID	ACE Identifier	Dates Held	ACE Credit Recommendations

NER- SR   NONE ASSIGNED 28-JUL-1987

Seaman Recruit:

To assimilate recruits into the Navy way of life and to prepare them for further advanced training in specialized Navy occupations:

- None

9502   NEC-9502-003   28-DEC-2002

Instructor:

Individuals direct teaching and learning activities in schools, training centers, and selected reserve units; write learning objectives; prepare test items; evaluate instructional materials and results; and counsel students on academic learning problems.

• Introduction to Teaching and Learning	3 SH	L	
• Public Speaking	3 SH	L	

The American Council on Education Military Guide

The American Council on Education (ACE) collaborates with the DoD, providing oversight, guidance, and recommendations to college campuses on how to review military training and experience. ACE provides recommendations to award appropriate college credit for members of the Armed Forces. The Military Guide presents credit recommendations that appear on the JST for formal courses and occupations offered by all branches of the military (A. C. o. Education, 2016b). Additionally, ACE provides quality assurance and policy guidance for the JST used by the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Coast Guard ("College Credit for Military Experience,").

Teams of college and university registrars created the military course exhibit as a reporting method on the results of ACE course evaluations. ACE provides credit recommendations as a guide that can work within the framework of an institution's policies and practices. In 2016, ACE convened a group of faculty evaluators, college and university registrars, and other key users to make recommendations to make it easier for college and university registrars to draw parallels between military occupations and college-level learning. As a result, the ACE guide includes a format with three key areas for evaluation: 1) A single summary of the duties performed by service members in that occupation, 2) Credit recommendations for each paygrade/skill level within the occupation, and 3) Detailed learning outcomes for each subject area listed in the credit recommendations that document exactly what the student has learned in each subject area (A. C. o. Education, 2017).

The focus of this study is military transfer credit, but it is important to note that institutions of higher education can use the Military Guide in various ways to award credit. Below are some

ways institutions of higher education can use the Military Guide to make credit recommendations from the course evaluation:

- A single summary of the duties performed by service members in that occupation

- Credit recommendations for each paygrade/skill level within the occupation, and

- Detailed learning outcomes for each subject area listed in the credit recommendations that document exactly what the student has learned in each subject area. (A. C. o. Education, 2017)

Each institution of higher education examines the credit awarded from military experience. The Military Guide can be used in various ways by institutions of higher education to award credit. Below are some ways institutions of higher education use credit recommendations from the course evaluation to award credit:

- to replace a required course

- as an optional course within the major

- as a general elective

- to meet basic degree requirements

- to waive a prerequisite

Institutions of higher education may replace a required course based upon two categories: the ACE military transfer guide recommendation and/or campus Department approval of the unit(s). Additionally, some schools give students the option of petitioning for credit through submitting a portfolio of their work, Klein-Collins says. That portfolio often consists of supportive documentation as well as a written narrative that outlines what students learned, the context in which they learned it, and how they have applied that knowledge. Faculty in that subject area then review the portfolio and make a recommendation on whether the student should

receive credit (Haynie, 2014). Next, courses are considered optional within the major, which means a transfer unit may be applied toward the degree of study. This removes the need for enrolling in a separate course in the student's major. Many institutions of higher education use military transfer credits as a general elective. Basic degree requirements are similar at each of the campuses within the institutional system of this study. Students must complete basic requirements for graduating with a bachelor's degree (The California State University, 2018). Each campus outlines the requirements for graduation and for graduation in specific majors, which can be found in the University Catalog.[9] The final area where credit may be awarded is to waive a prerequisite. Prerequisites are outlined in the University Catalog for students. These prerequisites are courses that are required to be completed before taking upper level major courses.

In addition to these areas, service members can gain credit for military experience by taking standardized tests. CLEP and DANTES allow service members and veterans to receive college credit for what they already know through examination in 33 areas such as math, science, English, foreign language, and history (Levine, 2014). In conclusion, each of these areas provide a responsibility by the student and institution to abide by policies. Due to the complexities of transfer credit, institutions need to clearly identify the application and transfer credit process for students.

Challenges with Military Transcripts

To decide whether students should get credit for their experience or education, colleges and universities typically review not only transcripts, but also details of specific classes they

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[9] For example, most bachelor's degrees require 180 units for graduation. Most science-based majors may require more units. A "unit" is generally equal to the amount of hours spent in class. Most campuses require a specific number of units to be completed at the institution of study to receive a bachelor's degree from the college (The California State University, 2018).

completed. Military transcripts can consist of indecipherable acronyms— the "military alphabet," one university administrator calls it, rattling off a list of numbered and lettered forms and courses— and some are even confidential. Further complications of transcript evaluation for college administrators include deciphering curriculum for a class that may be different in each branch of the military (Marcus, 2016b). NCES states, "institutional transcripts make it difficult to identify the origin of a given credit after subsequent student transfers/coenrollments (i.e., not all institutions itemize transfer credits, making it difficult to identify the source institution)." ACE states, "The recommendations have been widely accepted because formal military courses share certain key elements with traditional postsecondary education programs. They are formally approved and administered, are designed for the purpose of achieving learning outcomes, are conducted by qualified persons with specific subject-matter expertise, and are structured to provide for the reliable and valid assessment of student learning (A. C. o. Education, 2016a)."

The recommendations have been widely recognized, but there are two key problems in this research that persist. The first problem is that the Guide provides recommendations rather than policy or direct credit transfer. Although ACE provides a military guide to assist in placing active-duty service members and veterans in postsecondary programs of study and jobs, the recommendations may be modified by institutions admitting students (A. C. o. Education, 2016a). The credit recommendations serve as an advisory function for the application. Institutions of higher education make final decisions on credit.

The second problem is that institutions award credit as elective or general education. "One of the biggest challenges is for the service member to understand credit transfer policies at an institution," says Michele S. Spires, ACE's director of military programs and an Air Force spouse. "It's a whole different language." Spires is the lead member of an ACE team that

evaluates military courses and occupations for a match in civilian higher education. "Take a current service member whose MOS is in the engineering field," Spires (2014) says.

> Given this experience, he may want to add an engineering degree to his resume. Some institutions of higher education will carefully evaluate the soldier's specific military training and MOS and find the matching credits in their engineering curriculum. Others may not allow any ACE credit recommendations to count toward an engineering degree. Instead, the institution may sweep them into the general education category.

Thus, while this service member may believe he is eligible for a certain number of engineering credits—turning his military experience into completed courses in his major—some universities may not allow that to happen (Levine, 2014).

Some of the common complaints about receiving college credit for military service are as follows:

- The desired area of study or program is different than their MOC (Military Occupation Code).
- Military experience or training is determined to be duplicate and applied to the same transfer credit recommendation.
- Most ACE credits typically only apply to lower level and free elective coursework such as associate degree level classes.
- Typically, very few credits apply toward core requirement, upper level course work.
- The institution's transfer credit policies are not transparent.
- Ultimately, colleges determine the military college credits accepted and how they apply to a specific degree.

- Colleges do not always follow the ACE recommendations, or they may interpret them differently from one school to the next (MilitaryBenefits, 2017).

Chapter 5 discusses many of the challenges on Campus B highlighting many of the challenges faced in bridging gaps to implement an effective credit for prior learning programs. These include faculty engagement, articulation process (Academic Senate vs. Department Chairs), campus awareness, role of ACE, and resources (e.g. staffing, funding, data) (Nelson, Lozano, & Elke Azpeitia, 2018).

The GI Bill changed the academic requirements for veterans entering college campuses and university settings. In 1945, the GI Bill began the first military transfer credit on college campuses. Since 1945, ACE Military Programs have provided a collaborative link between the U. S. Department of Defense (DoD) and higher education through the review of military training and experiences for the award of equivalent college credits for members of the armed forces. Registrars, admissions officers, academic advisors, career counselors and DoD Voluntary Education professionals have a basis for recognizing military educational experiences in terms of civilian academic credit through the Military Guide Online.

ACE's support of the military since founded during World War I. ACE worked toward the passage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (known as the GI Bill) in 1944, and later the Post-9/11 GI Bill in 2008. ACE offers detailed resources for institutions to help them support their military-connected students, as well as resources for service members and veterans. In addition, ACE founded the Program on Non-collegiate Sponsored Instruction, in 1940 to assist campuses in granting credit for what service members and veterans had learned while in the service. ACE's Military Evaluations Program continues to this day and ACE's credit recommendations appear in the Military Guide and on military transcripts. The Military Guide

includes all evaluated courses and occupations from 1954 to the present (The American Council

on Education, 2017).

In 1954, ACE began to formalize a Military Guide that would provide recommendations for

college credit. The Military Guide is the sole source of information for all military courses and

occupations evaluated by ACE, which makes credit recommendations based on reviews

conducted by college and university faculty members actively teaching in the areas under

consideration for college credit transfer and articulation (American Council on Education, 2013).

Founded in 1918, ACE has served the federal government, institutions of higher education, and

military-connected students. ACE helps military and veteran students attain their postsecondary

education goals through evaluations of military training and experiences and by facilitating the

process of military transcripts.

Institutional Role in Credit Transfer

The lack of knowledge about institutionalization including but not limited to norms,

policies, and procedures is a problem surrounding military transfer credit at institutions of higher

education. Administrators, the VA, etc. have prioritized policies around graduation outcome and

measurement, but have not started at the point of entry—veteran student transfer credit and how

each institution places different values, norms, and procedures in their organizational systems.

The science of administration is inconsistent with organizational operation, which makes the

study relevant. This raises questions about relationships, the availability of resources at

institutions of higher education, the roles of control and the role of staff, auxiliary agencies,

boards, faculty, or articulation officers. How might these informal structures be similar or

different at each type of organization? What defines a decision?

The Council for Adult and Exceptional Learning identifies that many institutions do not have formal written policy available to students (Haynie, 2014). In many cases, students are unaware that they can apply military experience to undergraduate or graduate study. Credit transfer policies also vary by state and institution (Levine, 2014). Student veterans must inquire about policies with the institution reviewing their military transfer credit.

Chapter 4: Ethnographic Autobiography

This chapter systematically analyzes my personal experience with interviews at state institutions of higher education. The process and product of my steps are a part of understanding cultural experience and the roots of culture within the institutions. Additionally, the experience looks at how public managers as leaders can influence and shape commitments by managing the process within organizational commitments. The chapter will systematically analyze my personal experience in order to understand the informal organization and cultural experience. This relates to institutional theory to understand more about the natural history of the institution related to the informal vs. formal organization. One of the areas that was not clear within the institution was the human capital selection process for hiring and selecting articulation officers. As the interviews will discuss in Chapter five, administrators were unclear about how articulation officers were selected for their roles and duties. Further, it appears that the organization was barely institutionalized for lack of clearly defined roles for military transfer credit in a few instances on campuses. What became evident through my personal experience was that public administrators often did not know who performed military transfer credit on campus. In several instances I was referred to someone on campus who did not perform this job duty. The public website suggesting official public administrative titles for "veteran services" of "veteran liaison" were not a clear indicator for positions within the institution that fulfilled military transfer credit and articulation. The following sections will analyze my personal experience with the following institutions for higher education: Office of the Chancellor within the state of California, Campus A, Campus B, The Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, George Mason University, and The University of Virginia.

I began my inquiry with the Office of the Chancellor within the state of California on October 17, 2017. The California state system provided a large sample of institutions of higher education to examine. My initial outreach was to the Director of Veterans Affairs for the Office of the Chancellor. In this role, the Director of Veterans Affairs collaborates with internal and external partners to advocate, advise, assist, and resource military-connected student success within the 23 college campuses (University, 2019). As a former employee of the Office of the Chancellor, I had a prior working relationship with the Director of Veterans Affairs and the IRB process precluded me from interviewing him. Although an interview was not possible, the Director was able to provide information on the current policies and practices set by the institutional system for each of the college campuses. This information included research and data that is mentioned in my methodology section.

In order to find the correct administrators to begin interviews on each campus, I was required to go through an approval process directed by the Office of the Chancellor. It was not possible for me to contact campus administrators for interviews until I completed an approval for my research through the Office the Chancellor. This is important to note, because there was a clear cultural commitment by the institution to protect the mission, reputation of the institution, campuses, and identity of the employees. I received an email through the Veterans Affairs office with an overview of the policies and procedures of the Office of the Chancellor to start research. It stated, "in order for doctoral candidates to be approved to conduct research regarding veterans and military-affiliated students in the [Office of the Chancellor] they would need to: 1) receive approval from their campus IRB; 2) provide the director of Active Duty and Veterans Affairs a copy of the IRB approval as well as Chapters 1-3; and, 3) follow the rules of privacy, information security, and anonymity necessary to protect individual, campus, and system

identities and information (Personal Communication)." Upon approval, the Office of the Chancellor provides a formal letter of approval or memorandum of record for any research conducted on any of their 23 campuses. This showed a defining commitment to the mission of the organization and the Director of Veterans Affairs holding responsibility of the employees to protect themselves to maintain the autonomy of the institution and campuses.

In response, I submitted my IRB approval letter from Virginia Tech and chapters 1, 2, and 3 for review by the Academic Research Office and Veterans Affairs at the Office of the Chancellor. The need to send in my dissertation chapters showed the cultural commitment of the institution to protect what was being written about the organization prior to allowing interviews to begin with public administrators. Further, this showed a need to control public perceptions of the veteran's programs within the institution and on campuses. Additionally, this premise of reviewing work examines the root of culture by this individual public manager as leader within the Office of the Chancellor to connect to organizational commitments. By reviewing work prior to approving research to take place and requesting anonymity, the public perception of military transfer credit was being protected by the Director of Veterans Affairs. While I waited for approval to conduct research on campuses, the Director of Veterans Affairs referred me to request an interview with the Academic Vice Chancellor of Research (AVC) at the Office of the Chancellor. I submitted a written response for an interview with the AVC of Research. This suggestion was made because of the institutional background and research that was facilitated at the systemwide level on student adult populations for student veterans that would provide insight into campus policies. Two months after I submitted chapters 1-3, I received a response from the Office of Veterans Affairs. The response requested edits to the dissertation to include anonymity for all campuses and personnel. Further, the Office of Academic Research would not move

forward with an interview because they felt the questions were not in their scope of study and I needed to conduct the research on the campuses. Additionally, to receive a formal letter of approval from the Office of the Chancellor I was required to re-submit Chapters 1, 2, and 3 with the above-mentioned edits. The request for revisions shows a need to influence and protect the identity of the roots of the organizational culture.

After I made the edits and resubmitted my draft, I did not receive a formal letter of approval from the Office of the Chancellor instead it came in the form of a forwarded email approval. The Office of the Chancellor asked me to indicate what college campuses would be included in my study. This is also important to note, because the Director of Veterans Affairs was a public leader that expressed interest in improving military transfer credit. Documents, surveys, and PowerPoint presentations on recent internal work were publicly available for my research in order to learn more about the Director of Veterans Affairs commitment to veterans at the institutional level. It was clear there was a commitment to change the veteran military transfer credit policy, but there was not yet a direct policy or process yet to move forward.

Approval from the Office of the Chancellor via the Office of Sponsored Projects was communicated directly to campus administrators that worked in the IRB offices that I requested to interview. I was required to submit to the Director of Veterans Affairs and the Office of Sponsored Projects the identity of the campuses I would contact. The identity of campuses was one way these public leaders protected the perceptions of the veteran's programs, and public understanding of the process. On February 15, 2018, the Sponsored Projects office sent an email to Campus A and Campus B explaining the Chancellor's Office approval process and review so far by the Research Office and Veteran Affairs. From start to finish petitioning the Office of the Chancellor to approve the first step in my research process to talk to the campuses took

approximately five months. This email by the public administrator in the Sponsored Projects

Office served as approval from the Office of the Chancellor permitting me to talk to Chief

Research Officers at the campuses.

Campus A and B had similar processes for beginning research on their campuses. At the

time of my research, the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) supported by the

Office of Health and Human Service (HHS) released new guidelines supporting a single IRB for

multi-site research (Health, 2018). Both Chief Research Officers asked me to submit an IRB for

each campus. I inquired with each campus Chief Research Officer if their institution adopted a

policy on a single IRB system. On Campus A, I was referred to the Compliance and Information

Officer to address questions on a single IRB system. Their response was "[Campus A] will be

undergoing revision in advance of the 2020 date in order to comply with the regulations that

govern Federally-funded research. However, as your project will commence in advance of that

date and it is not federally funded, the existing [Campus A] policy that requires our approval for

you to conduct this project at [Campus A] still applies." Additionally, the Compliance and

Information Officer noted that approval from [Campus A] did not guarantee access to subjects at

[Campus A] and their office would not be able to assist in recruiting subjects.

The response from the Chief Research Officer at Campus B was that their campus was

working within a six-month extension on the policy. Their best-case scenario was that this

process would be further delayed and thus they recommended I complete an IRB to comply with

Campus B policy. The CRO shared they were willing to help me perform my research on

campus, but that current policies to submit a separate IRB were required at this point. In

addition, the IRB office was clear that even though they approved the IRB for research on human

subjects, the decision for participation was completely up to the public employee. Both Campus

A and B required an IRB but had slightly different processes. I was referred to additional campus

personnel to start receiving information about submitting an application. The next section

outlines the bureaucracy associated with submitting an application on each campus.

On both Campus A and B, access to submit an IRB application is only available for

campus employees. Individuals off campus must be referred to additional campus staff that

support the application process for external individuals. I submitted additional forms to receive a

separate log in account to access the IRB forms for application on Campus A. The application

was submitted on February 17, 2018. On March 5, 2018 I received a note from the electronic

submission server and Compliance/Information Officer that updates to the Consent Form needed

to include a signature of the campus staff and contact information for the IRB office staff. On

March 16, 2018, I received confirmation of Campus A IRB approval to conduct research with

human subjects.

Figure 7. Campus Personnel Involved in Processing an IRB Application on Campus A

Chancellor's Office	Director of Veterans Affairs
Chancellor's Office	Academic Vice Chancellor of Research
Chancellor's Office	Sponsored Projects
Campus A	Chief Research Officer
Campus A	Chair, Institutional Research Board
Campus A	Chair, Compliance/Information Officer

On Campus B, I was referred to the Chair for the Institutional Review Board.

Applications are submitted via a campus server and only accessible to employees of that

particular campus. The application system is different at each of the institutional systems. As a

result, as an individual applying off campus, I was referred via email to the Assistant

Compliance Associate in the IRB office to fill out forms to gain access. On Campus B, I

submitted an additional form that permitted the Assistant Compliance Associate to submit the

materials for review on my behalf. The application was submitted on February 17, 2018. On

March 16, 2018 I sent an inquiry on the status of the application. The request came back from the

Assistant Compliance Associate asking for changes to my Informed Consent Form with

signatures by campus employees and contact information on the form for the campus IRB staff.

The Consent form was also edited to inform the participant that I would be recording their

responses. I made the updates and resubmitted the form on March 16, 2018. On April 2, 2018, I

received confirmation of IRB approval to conduct research on Campus B.

Figure 8. Campus Personnel Involved in Processing an IRB Application on Campus B

Chancellor's Office	Director of Veterans Affairs
Chancellor's Office	Academic Vice Chancellor of Research
Chancellor's Office	Sponsored Projects
Campus B	Interim Dean of Research
Campus B	IRB Manager
Campus B	IRB Chair
Campus B	Assistant Compliance Associate

Interview Contact

The Office of the Chancellor made recommendations on administrators at the public

universities to speak with who directly handled articulation of military transfer credit on Campus

A and B. On Campus A, I began by contacting two individuals for an interview. The information

was pulled from the campus website and based on publicly available position titles. I first

contacted the Veterans Affairs School Certifying Official. I also contacted the Veterans

Coordinator. I did not receive a response from either of these two individuals in the certifying

office. I followed up with the Office of the Chancellor staff on their suggestions to see if they

had an additional resource to contact related to military articulation on campus. I received one

additional suggestion to speak with an individual in the University Registrar.

I was told by the Director of Veterans Affairs in the Chancellor's Office that the campus

A staff in the University Registrar directly handled all military affairs and would be the best

personnel to speak with on transfer credits. I sent an email to the military articulation staff and

received a phone call in return. During the phone call, the University Registrar shared they were not the best person to speak with on military transfer credit. The individual recommended two staff members, the Associate Registrar and the Academic Progress Counselor. It was noted, the Academic Progress Counselor in the Registrar recently attended a systemwide event on military transfer credit. I contacted the Office of the Registrar staff members on April 27, 2018 and conducted interviews with both on May 16, 2018. During the interview, the staff members suggested that I speak with the Veterans Success Center Coordinator. The individual recently started in the position but would be able to provide information and insight into military transfer credit on campus. I sent an email request for an interview with this staff member on May 16, 2018 and conducted an interview on June 7, 2018. After these interviews, it was clear no further interviews were possible on campus.

Figure 9. Campus A Interview Summary

Contact Code	Interview Request	Referral	Interview Scheduled
D	April 27, 2018	Chancellor's Office	May 16, 2018
E	April 27, 2018	Contact D1	May 16, 2018
F	May 16, 2018	Contact D & E	June 7, 2018
D1	March 17, 2018	Chancellor's Office	None
D2	March 17, 2018	Chancellor's Office	None

On Campus B, I reached out to one individual initially recommended by the Office of the Chancellor. I sent an email inquiry on April 4th, 2018 and an interview was scheduled and conducted as Interview A on May 11, 2018. I began to look for further interviews by searching the campus website to examine publicly available position titles and identify personnel who handled military transfer and credit articulation. I contacted a Veteran Specialist in the Office of the Registrar and requested an interview via email on April 4, 2018. I later followed up with a phone call and left a message. I did not receive a response from this staff member. After Interview A, I was given recommendations to contact two campus employees that directly

handled military transfer credit on campus. Interviewee A shared that although there are

individuals that are aware of military transfer credit, there are only two additional campus

employees considered experts on policies and practices. I was referred to contact the articulation

officer on Campus B. I sent an email interview request on May 29, 2018. One of the campus

staff members shared the same name as another campus employee and this employee referred me

to the appropriate staff member on campus. Interviews were scheduled on June 12, 2018 and

June 25, 2018. After speaking with three individuals on campus it was understood that my

research on this campus was complete and there were no other public employees with further

information on Campus B.

Figure 10. Campus B Interview Summary

Contact Code	Interview Request	Referral	Interview Scheduled
A	April 4, 2018	Chancellor's Office	May 11, 2018
B	May 29, 2018	Contact A	June 25, 2018
C	May 29, 2018	Contact A	June 12, 2018
A1	April 4, 2019	Campus Website	None
A2	April 4, 2018	Campus Website	None

Additional Inquires for Interviews at Public State Institutions of Higher Education

On November 27, 2017, I began to contact additional institutions of higher education

within the Virginia public higher education system to inquire about conducting interviews. My

original interest in the project was looking at multiple campuses within one institutional system

and comparing policies and practices across similar public institutional systems. The dissertation

provided a comparison of two campuses within one institutional system. An area for further

research would be to continue to do research across similar public institutions of higher

education. I sent inquiries to The Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VT),

George Mason University (GMU), and the University of Virginia (UVA).

At VT, I began by sending an email to the Office of Veteran Services. My first correspondence was on Nov. 28, 2017. I received a quick reply from the Coordinator of Veteran Services saying that their office would be pleased to help with the research and set up an interview. They asked for the formal interview questions to be sent to their office. The Coordinator also recommended I reach out to interview the campus veteran liaison in the Office of Admissions. The campus veteran liaison was directly copied on the email from the veteran services staff. I followed up on the same day with the questions, IRB approval letter from VT, and suggested dates and times for the interview via email. On December 13, 2017, I sent a follow-up email inquiry to both staff members requesting availability for an interview. On January 8, 2018, I called both offices to inquire on a potential interview. I left a message with a staff member directly in the Office of Veteran Services but did not receive a response or further communication. In the Office of Admissions, I was told that my request may take a while and that this was the busiest time of year for staff. I never received a reply to my email or phone message from the Veteran Liaison in the Office of Admissions.

Further, I sent an email inquiry to the Office of Military Services at George Mason University (GMU). I requested an interview with administrators handling decisions on veteran transfer credit to learn more about the policy process. I followed up with a phone call to the office. I never received a reply to my email or phone message from the Office of Military Services.

On December 6, 2017, I contacted the Office of the University Registrar at The University of Virginia (UVA), requesting an interview with administrators handling decisions on veteran transfer credit to learn more about the policy process. I received an automatic reply that the request had been received. I did not receive a reply to my email request. In addition, I

searched for information on military services on campus or a separate office. The information provided on the website only directed and referred to the Registrar's Office as the point of contact on military transfer credit (Virginia, 2019).

Additionally, on November 28, 2017, to gain insight about the commonwealth of Virginia and higher education policies I contacted the Director of Education Programs for the Virginia Department of Veterans Services. I requested an interview to learn more about potential policies at this institution that may impact state public schools in Virginia. I did not receive a reply to my email request. I followed up with a phone call but did not receive a response.

After speaking with my Chair, I made the decision to move forward with the interviews on two campuses within the California public state system. Lack of knowledge about policies and procedures is limited with campus staff. In addition, in general, my findings were at the institutional and systemwide level. Knowledge about staff that supported veteran students with military transfer credit was hard to determine. There is a data limitation within the institutional system on clear titles and roles and contact information is unclear.

Additionally, many schools award military credit as a general elective credit. Steve Borden, director of the Pat Tillman Veterans Center at Arizona State University says, "It doesn't fill in any specific degree requirements. It makes the service member feel good, but it doesn't mean that it is constructive toward helping them complete their degree early" (Haynie, 2014). A review of relevant literature, contributes to the research conversation, identifying gaps and setting the stage for my research. I have reviewed state- and national-level education policy on military transfer credit and higher education for how national recommendations from ACE guide decisions. I offered further detail on policies surrounding military transfer credit in California. In

the following chapter, I discuss methodology used to explore the science of administration at the

state level.

Chapter 5. Methodology for Public Administration and Military Transfer Credit

Research Design

      This chapter presents the research design; documents the data collection, management, and analysis. It further addresses the validity of the case-study methodology used to collect information on military transfer credits used in this dissertation. In this chapter, I discuss how design decisions contribute to understanding how institutions implement public administration policies and practices for awarding military credit on college campuses. I used public sources of information on federal and state guidelines for articulation as my first order analysis. For my second order analysis, in-depth interviews and an enthoautobiography identified gaps and examined the administration of policies and practices on military transfer credit at institutions of higher education. Although my research was an iterative process, it was important to maintain transparency in research design and implementation of data collection. This chapter details my research process and design.

Rationale for Case Study

      Given the subject of this research—military transfer credits and higher education public administration—I made many design decisions on how best to understand the relationship of institutionalization in these fields. In this chapter, I discuss my research design, including my analysis as a researcher in this project, techniques used, and methods for applying the design to inform academic conversations. I used legislative and historical legal records as my first order analysis to understand the policies and procedures including the GI Bill, laws (state and federal), and executive orders for the public institutions in the case study. Additionally, I used public documents provided by the Office of the Chancellor to collect information examining the

policies on articulation of transfer credit. This chapter details my processes for my dissertation study.

The rationale for the project examines the variance in rules, norms, practices, and decision making across campuses under the same institutional structure. The mission of the selected institutional higher education system is, "to advance and extend knowledge, learning, and culture, especially throughout California. To provide opportunities for individuals to develop intellectually, personally, and professionally" (The California State University, 2019). Given the mission of the institutional system, it provides a similar structure and approach to public administration that characterize college campuses and their traditions. I collected documents from the Office of the Chancellor and Campus B that allowed for an understanding of the history of policies and procedures. It is important to note that Campus A did not have any documents on previous policies and were working with a policy that was not a good model (Interview D). Selznick views the importance of history—the "natural history" of the evolution of a living form that is adaptively changing over time (H. L. Tosi, 2009). A 2016 survey by the Office of the Chancellor provided insight into the current state of military transfer credit at each of the institutional campuses (University, 2019). The survey reported, 50% answered that the campus does not have a military transfer credit policy posted on a website (O'Rourke, 2016). Additionally, the 2016 institution survey chart, shown in Figure 7 below, provides examples of variance in decision making for credit for prior learning (CPL).

Figure 11. Description of CPL Policies

Description of CPL Policies
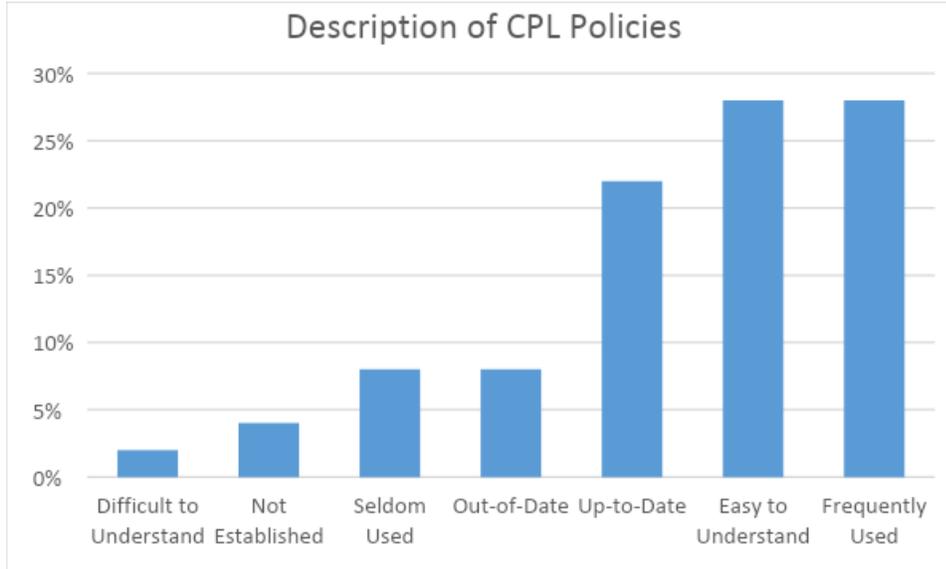
Source: (O'Rourke, 2016)

This survey provides important data because it is the first step by the Chancellor's Office to learn what information is available or mostly unavailable to the public for prospective and current student veterans. Public information is limited or in many cases unavailable (O'Rourke, 2017). The survey provided leadership in the Office of the Chancellor information on where guidance was needed at the institutional level on military transfer. In a presentation to Counselors in the California Community Colleges, leadership from the Office of the Chancellor highlight general guidance to veterans on transferring credit to a college within the institution. The presentation provided general information rather than any specific information about how the process works on campus or examples of credit that may be transferred for general electives or towards a degree. The recommendations give autonomy to the campuses for setting the policy agenda for their campus on military transfer and encourages community college counselors to urge veteran students transferring to do their homework on what is necessary at each campus. This enforces the mission of supporting veterans but is a default of leadership in not providing

specific areas for support in the area of transfer credit. The survey and presentation to community colleges highlight a communication problem between the Chancellor's Office leadership and administrators on campus. The problem is evident that there are multiple policies in place on campuses and very little is formally written down, which creates a lack of transparency.

Campus B provided two documents that were important to this dissertation. The first was a master's Thesis provided by an administrator on Campus B and the second was a PowerPoint presentation given to campus veteran administrators by Campus B and the Office of the Chancellor. These two documents are highlighted during the interviews. More information is provided in the interviews in Chapter 6 on the impact of these documents to changes in policy on Campus B. Additionally, an ethnoautobiography is included in this dissertation, Chapter 4, to explore my personal experience and connection to make sense of the cultural, political, and mission trying to understand policymaking.

To frame the adaptive Campus A and Campus B cases in the study, I employ Yin's (2008) method in examining my research. He proposes three factors for determining the best research strategy: 1) the type of research questions posed, 2) the extent of control an investigator has over the actual behavioral events, and 3) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events. Since the research questions posed in this study do not require control over behavioral events, Yin's conditions for the case study strategy are relevant.

Case studies offer specific frames for the examination of date. Identifying the appropriate case study type is vital for framing the issue. This study considers the three major types of case studies: explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive (Yin, 2008). After careful consideration, I selected the exploratory case study method to focus on the "what" and "how" of the

administration of transfer credit. Documentation and in-dept interviews were the primary

evidence for this exploratory case study. Documents examined included contemporary records,

confidential and public reports, government documents, and media reports and opinions.

Documents and in-depth interviews are acceptable scholarly data sources for case-study

research. Marshall and Rossman, 2015) see the combined strengths of documents and interviews

as supporting researchers to: 1) obtain large amounts of expansive and contextual data quickly;

2) access immediate follow-up data collection for clarifications and omissions; 3) uncover

nuances in culture; 4) formulate hypotheses with greater flexibility; 5) establish background

context for examination of activities, behaviors, and events; 6) discover the subjective side, the

"native" perspective" of organizational processes; 7) facilitate discovery of complex

interconnections in social relationships; and, 8) enable analysis, validity checks, and

triangulation. The relationship between public administrators and military transfer credit

policymaking is complex. As Chapter 6 will highlight, the process is not transparent for either

public administrator or student veteran. Using Marshall and Rossman's guide for research

establishes a need to uncover further details on institutional history on policies by looking at

institutional documentation and interviews. Both methods of research are important for the study

to establish a context on how administrators made decisions previously and how perspectives on

organizational processes are changing in future policymaking. Interviews give more information

that is not documented and provide a way to clarify and learn about interconnections in

relationships between campus administrators and student veterans.

Case Selection

Two research sites were selected for this investigation; both are California public four-

year institutions of higher education and remain anonymous throughout this study. The campuses

were selected for their willingness to contribute to the study and similar demographics and student population, which are shared in detail in Chapter 5. A previous association with the institutional system overseeing the campuses was a key factor in gaining access to the individual public campuses. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan transition to peace keeping missions, an influx of troops returning home may lead to increased use of GI Bill funds and enrolled student veterans. The unit of analysis for the case study is two Bachelor and master's degree granting institutions of higher education in the state of California.

California is home to 2.2 million veterans (California Department of Veterans Affairs, 2018) and was chosen for study due to the public higher education institutional system serving the largest number of veterans in the U.S. Public institutions were selected for study since the vast majority of student veterans enroll in public institutions (79.2 percent), with a smaller percentage enrolling in private nonprofit (10.7 percent) and proprietary schools (10.1 percent). Additionally, The Million Records project reports the large majority of student veterans who graduate do so from public schools (71.7 percent) (America, 2014). Data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) on public institutions reports that the top individual campuses for veteran enrollment are largely concentrated around Washington, DC, (in Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina) and in the Southwest (Texas) (Pizzo, 2015). The top public schools, such as the University of Maryland University College (UMUC), enrolling veterans provide online learning. These public college campuses specialize in distance learning, which makes them a unique provider of veteran education (Pizzo, 2015).

Specifically, California was selected because of the large number of public colleges and universities under one single institutional structure. The National Conference of State Legislators reports, "every state has veterans attending higher education institutions, but 80 percent of the

beneficiaries reside in just 23 states" (Legislatures, 2014). Additionally, California is unique because it serves the largest amount of GI Bill recipients on campus (Legislatures, 2014).

The California state public higher education system falls under the 1960 Master Plan for Higher Education. The Master Plan for Higher Education includes a three-tier system of public higher education: The University of California system, The California State University System, and The California Community College System. The state of California has historically been committed to providing high quality, public education that is accessible to qualified students. However, participation in postsecondary education is voluntary, and not constitutionally guaranteed as free of charge unlike the state-funded K-12 education program (Commission.).

The cases are all public institutions under the Master Plan for Higher Education, Brown Act, in the state of California. The study examines two colleges that are baccalaureate and graduate degree granting institutions to understand more about the background and history of formal committees making decisions on military transfer credit. Additionally, interviews conducted with public administrators at campuses that are under one single institutional hierarchy offered opportunities to learn more about oversight, process, and campus-wide initiatives for the articulation of military credit. The cases were selected based on recommendations made by the oversight and approval of the institution and their individual Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The cases, selected from a California public higher education system comprising of 23 campuses (almost 447,000 students, and 45,000 faculty and staff), make it one of the largest and most diverse higher education systems, as well as one of the most affordable. When agreeing to allow research, the institution requested anonymity. The California Department of Veterans Affairs describes the public university system as providing services on campus and through

student organizations that serve the interests of veteran students. It further describes the institution as operating

> to promote and expand the camaraderie and care of former military service members attending the university. These individual programs also represent and promote the well-being and academic achievement and ease of a collegiate experience for veteran students at the university. They offer similar opportunities to maintain the same standards of leadership, ethics, values and professional success they experienced in the armed services." (California Dept of Veterans Affairs)

Informants, Interview Questions, Data Collection

Looking at the 23 campuses within the institutional system, the Office of the Chancellor made recommendations to select two campuses for study since they have similar academic disciplines, similar study body populations, and are in different geographical locations in the state of California. The participants were selected using a purposeful sampling technique (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Selected participants were part of the articulation of military transfer credits at public institutions of higher education.

The informants came from a selection of four-year institutions under one institutional system of higher education in the state of California. First, I created a preliminary list of potential interview candidates on campuses that listed articulation in their job title or appeared on a list as a resource to contact on a veteran resource center website. I started with three main areas: Office of Admissions, Office of the Registrar, and the veteran services. On Campus A, student veteran services are under the institutional title Campus Veteran Success Center and at Campus B, the name of the facility is Campus Veteran Resource Center. These two administrative offices were important to understanding more about who plays a key role in military transfer credit on

campus. Interviews provided information about transferring military credit toward college two-year or four-year programs as it was not available via the college websites. The websites list the necessary documentation that is needed for a formal transfer credit review but does not share the institutional policies or practices about credit acceptance. All campus offices listed public contact information for public administrators on the website and were selected as potential interview participants. Second, in addition to the participants I identified, I relied on Marshall and Rossman's snowball technique. The snowball technique allowed me to include recommendations from interview subjects to learn more about the institutional process for military credit articulation (Marshall & Rossman, 2015). I began with the list of all individuals listing veteran services or coordinator in their work title as potential prospects to interview. I began by sending a formal request using the IRB-approved email for contact to inquire about an interview. Two responses came from these inquiries for an interview: 1) candidates for interview that did not have a role in military transfer credit responded with their availability to conduct an interview or 2) individuals made a recommendation for another public administrator on the college campus that served in this role or had more knowledge about the policies, norms, and practices on campus for articulation. Including the snowball sample recommendations for interviews allowed me to identify further individuals who made decisions in the creation of articulation policies and procedures on campus. Participants included such as faculty, Deans, Department Chairs, registrars, veteran service staff, and other public administrators.

Figure 9 provides the title of the interview participant at Campus A and Campus B. Speaking with college administration in each department provided background about campus administrators who handled the daily public administrative tasks of articulation. On Campus A, veteran military transfer credit is completed by only two administrators in the Office of the

Registrar. The interview participants were the Associate Registrar and the Academic Progress Counselor. In addition to the Office of the Registrar, an interview was conducted with the Veterans Success Center Coordinator to learn more about how information on process of policies, procedures, and norms for military transfer credit was communicated to veterans. The interview participants on Campus B were selected due to recommendations from the Campus Veteran Resources Center. The Campus Veteran Resource Center is the main point of contact for students self-identifying as veterans. The Veteran Services Coordinator is the main contact for providing documentation to veterans requesting military transfer credit in campus. The documentation is then submitted to the University Articulation Officer. The University Articulation Officer awards military transfer credit based on the institutional policies, procedures, and norms. Additionally, a Professor and Department Chair of Electromechanical Engineering Technology was selected for interview based on a recommendation from the Veteran Services Coordinator and the University Articulation Officer. This campus faculty member served as a faculty member on the ACE credit review. The experience with ACE review provided the campus with a deeper understanding of the ACE credit review process and how these credits translate to the campus level. Although the faculty is not directly in charge of the articulation process, the individual provided information and insight into how credits receive their recommendations. The participants on Campus A and Campus B received the IRB-approved interview questions prior to the interview.

Figure 12. Interview Participants

Agency and/or Title	Name
Campus B	Veterans Services Coordinator
Campus B	Professor and Department Chair

Campus B	University Articulation Officer
Campus A	Associate Registrar
Campus A	Academic Progress Counselor
Campus A	Veterans Success Center Coordinator

I developed the interview questions for the study that can be found in **Appendix F. Interview Questions**

Data Collection

All interviews were approved by the research protocol approved by The Virginia Technical Institutional Review Board (Appendix B). Prior to conducting interviews on the public campuses, the institution's Director of Veteran Affairs and Director of Research and Initiatives reviewed my research. These administrators asked for the study to undergo a separate review by each campus Director of Research and each public higher education campus required a separate Institutional Review Board approval (Appendix C & D). After the IRB was completed at each individual campus, the campus agreed to the study only if the institution and interview participants remained anonymous. I queried my committee and The Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Institutional Review Board on best practices for anonymity for participants and campuses.

Before each interview, I sent the participant the interview questions and asked for a signed electronic informed consent for participation form. The participants consented to conduct an audio-recorded interview. I acknowledged that the recording would only be used by the researcher to transcribe notes and would be safeguarded with a password-protected computer. The signature provided consent for the interview.

Process Tracing

This study used a process tracing design to understand the historical background of the GI Bill as a framework for student veterans at institutions of higher education and elite in-depth interviewing as a means of data collection to gain insight into the history of policies and processes of the institutions in charge of public administrators awarding credits. The study employs a non-probability sampling technique for identifying interview subjects as a means of collecting the kind of data necessary to conduct a process tracing study. The study uses Tansey's (2007) rationalization for using "a combination of reputational and positional criteria, and the use of both purposive and snowball sampling techniques." Process tracing relies on documentary research and interviewing to gather data (Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, 2005). Without a historical and contextual understanding of institutions, the study could not be fully analyzed and evaluated for their role in public administration to award military transfer credit.

The method of process tracing and institutional norms allowed for the examination of institutionalization. Process tracing combines social and institutional structure within the context with individual agency and their decision-making. The study sought to identify causal explanation to define institutionalization and the step in a process to make inferences on how that process took place and whether and how it generates an outcome (Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, 2015). Process tracing serves as the analytic tool for drawing descriptive and causal inferences from diagnostic pieces of evidence—often understood as a part of a sequence of events. Process tracing examines the unfolding of events or situations over time (Collier, 2011). In process tracing, the study examines histories, documents, and interview transcripts to learn whether the causal process a theory hypothesizes or implies in a case is in fact evident in the sequence and values of the intervening variables in that case (Alexander L. George and Andrew

Bennett, 2005). The study examined background, history, creation of the process of multiple and/or individuals contributing to rules, norms, and policy practices. The purpose of finding diagnostic evidence provides a basis for descriptive and casual inference (Collier, 2011).

Using George and Bennet's model of applying the process tracing method, elite in-depth interviewing was used as a method to attempt to identify the causal process—the causal chain and mechanism between the independent variables and the outcome of the dependent variable (Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, 2005). Tansey (2007) identifies elite interviewing as highly relevant for process tracing approaches to case study research. In this example, the information was not publicly available about policies and practices for public administrators on public college campuses. Elite interviews were an important part of gathering data about the cases to learn more about policymaking and adaptation at institutions of higher education. Due to the lack of ability of one or multiple administrators to recall specific details, parties involved or additional factors in the process of describing one event in time or sequence of events, the data underwent descriptive inference to gather as much information as possible about the events. The data examined the effects of variables at institutions of higher education to explore whether a given value on a variable is a cause of a given outcome of one or more of the cases (Mahoney, 2012). The information on a specific set of variables was gathered through a series of elite interviews where process tracing observed the sequence of events to learn as much about the events as possible. The process illuminated decisions on how veteran transfer credit shows a timeline that lists the sequence of events for how applicants are awarded credit. The sequence of events was examined for causal ideas from the narratives that confirm or disconfirm evaluations and hypothesis. The study uses the process tracing approach to make sense out of collecting data for the case study.

Transcription, Coding, and Analysis

My analysis began with transcribing and coding interview data. I audio-recorded my interviews and transcribed the material into text documents. The process of transcription allowed me to listen to the information in the interviews and make notes about potential codes that I could use in the coding process. While transcribing the material, re-reading, and creating an analysis process for collecting and transcribing data, I was able to start to see codes used for study.

This study uses Miles and Hubberman's (1994) three streams of qualitative analysis— data reduction, data display, and conclusions drawing/verification—after data collection in parallel form, to make up the domain called "analysis". Since there is no public information on how institutions of higher education award military veteran credit, I begin my inquiry with data collection. I started my analysis by looking at the websites of the institutions to collect information about what was available for prospective students on transfer credit. I examined information that was available on the mission and vision statements and any individual leaders on campus identifying as veteran resources or support. The study focuses on data in the form of words, that is, "language in the form of extended text. The words are based on observation, interviews, or documents" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). As Chapter 5 will discuss, Campus A and B do not keep written records of previous policies. Therefore, analysis of current practices for institutions on awarding transfer credit and interviewing leadership and administrative staff on past policies was necessary in order to retrieve data. To fill in the gap on institutional historical analysis, I required the knowledge of actors in the policy area and completed elite interviews as a part of my analysis. This gave the study information about language in the form of extended text and provided me with data for analysis. After the interviews, I transcribed the

audio-recorded information. I began coding my interview data to make sense of the words and organize it in a systematic way. Saldana (2013) identified, "when the major categories are compared with each other and consolidated in various ways you begin to transcend the 'reality' of your data and progress toward the thematic, conceptual, and theoretical."

Qualitative data analysis is complex. Because there is little scholarly research completed on institutions of higher education and public administration of military transfer credit, my research questions necessitated interviews as a primary data collection technique. Researchers must collect and transcribe notes and interviews and conduct data analysis based on words. Additionally, codes and coding can be challenging due to the nature of navigating and making sense of multiple sources of information. Rigorous data review means that information reviews occur in cycles, allowing for codes to be re-checked and verified and assimilation of additional information. This process, while laborious, supports the researcher in assuring reliability and validity of the data. To ensure that data was both valid and reliable, the interviews in this study were audio taped with an MP3 device. The researcher transcribed each interview after to produce research notes. Multiple means of reviewing data, recordings, coding, research notes, and checking for agreement of themes, assured the researcher that data was thoroughly analyzed.

I completed two cycles of coding to review the data collected and check and recheck the creation of data codes. The first cycle of coding broke down the qualitative data "into discrete parts, closely examining them, and comparing them for similarities and differences" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998 as cited in (Saldana, 2013). This cyclical process allowed me to examine the data from the public administrators closely to compare any similarities and/or differences at the institutions. Additionally, Strauss and Corbin (cited in Saldana, 2013) note that process coding is

appropriate for research that includes "ongoing action/interaction/emotion taken in response to situations, or problems, often with the purpose of reaching a goal or handling a problem.

The first cycle of coding revealed similarities and differences within the institutional public policy process and within the answers of public administrators responsible for decisions on military credit transfer articulation. The initial coding process allowed me to read through all my data and get familiar with the information. It was important to write down notes to get a sense of the overall data. Interviews may not run as expected and can take and unexpected turn, which is why it was important to have the same interview questions in order to address different aspects of the problem. Coding the data provided a way to organize the questions and code effectively without looking through all the interview data again.

The second cycle of coding examined the interview transcripts by organizing the responses by public administrator roles at the institutions. Public administrators were identified as state-level professionals who had any of the following titles: school certifying official, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, or Coordinator Veterans Services. At institutions of higher education administrators hold different job responsibilities for veteran services. This created a challenge for collecting data, because the role of administrators in military transfer credit varied campus to campus. If the specific title was not found, individuals that had qualifications in their job descriptions or duties as assigned that supported veteran services were used as a subject. These duties as assigned may include authority to complete all paperwork necessary to certify the enrollment and changes in enrollment for students eligible for VA educational benefits at their college or university. Within this process individuals may provide students with leadership, direction, strategic vision, and accountability to the Enrollment Management units. Enrollment management at the institution make the final decisions on

articulation of military units for transfer. These individuals may work at the institution in Financial Aid, Registrar's Office, Student Outreach Services, and Undergraduate Admissions, as well as other units as appropriate. The administrative staff in enrollment management ensuring appropriate planning for growth and development or additional qualifications of assisting with handling student issues. These issues included but were not limited to, transitioning from the military to higher education, selecting courses, understanding campus requirements, personal development and academic skill building, university withdrawal and appeals, providing short-term military leave support and tracking, and exploring career options. All subjects were competent adults, employed in public universities. No child, pregnant woman, or prisoner was included in the study. Additionally, I did not interview anyone with whom I previously worked within in a job. The need for this specific classification was important for the organization of data to learn and recognize emergent patterns at institutions.

A qualitative data collection was important because there is a lack of publicly available data on how public campuses make individual decisions to award military veteran credit (O'Rourke, 2017). The researcher interviewed adults working as public administrators at state colleges and universities that make decisions to award academic credit for military education. The researcher called all interview subjects. During the interview, the researcher took notes and recorded the interview with a digital voice recorder/MP3 player device. Additionally, taking notes during the interview helped to stay on track with the interview questions, and to take note of interesting information and other resources on campus to include as a part of the study. The interviews all lasted between 30 minutes to one hour and were recorded due to the length of the interview. The data from the interview and MP3 device were transferred onto a password-

protected hard drive. All participants were required to remain confidential per the request of the institutional administration.

I terminated data collection once I had interviewed all public administrators on campus that were involved with military articulation. Each interview was different, but they all provided similar explanations of problems and offered solutions the campus was working toward while highlighting patterns of institutional outcomes for future policy and public administration (Bryant & Charmaz, 2010).

Conclusion drawing and verification were based on how decisions differ or have similarities from the public university goals and expectations. Miles and Huberman (1994) note the importance of conclusion drawing and verification by pointing out, "the meanings emerging from the data have to be tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness, their 'confirmability'—that is, their validity. Otherwise we are left with interesting stories about what happened, or unknown truth and utility."

To create an analysis of the data collected in the study, codes were applied to interviews. Miles and Huberman (1994) explain, "codes usually are attached to 'chunks' of varying size-words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs, connected or unconnected to a specific setting." To make sense of a public administration process, the research questions were operationalized. The cases provide information and data, telling the stories of how institutions transfer military credit.

Summary

This chapter explains my research method and design. I introduced the decisions to undertake the research approach and identified key areas of study to learn more about veteran transfer credit. I began by stating the gap in literature and my decision to undertake a process research

approach. This background provides a framework for the study and process of analyzing the

results. I provide examples of the research design choices I made throughout the process.

Following this, I explained the scope, case study, and data collection and analysis—legislative

history and elite interviews. I provided information on analysis was necessary by interviewing as

a data collection technique in order to gain insight on institutional background and current public

policy practices. This was preceded by an in-depth explanation of how I analyzed the techniques

and methods for the findings. I concluded with a discussion of the limitations of the research

design. In the next chapters, I present my analysis and findings from this data.

Chapter 6. Analyzing Campus A and B

In this chapter, I discuss my findings from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with public administrators that oversee the process to transfer military credit at public institutions of higher education. First, I revisit the theoretical concepts that informed my research and interviews questions—institutionalism. Second, I explain my data structure that resulted from the interview analysis and transcription. My research design incorporates two phases of analysis—history and interviews.

Case Study of Institutions of Higher Education Organizational Process for Military Transfer Articulation

The implementation of military transfer credit on colleges campuses is ambiguous. The data is historical by investigating the chronology of institutional policies, practices, and the roles of public administrators and campus leadership in shaping present day organizational practices. To understand the institution requires an investigative approach to data collection. It appears that certain institutional characteristics, variables, or factors affect military transfer credit. As we have seen from the literature, certain institutional variables appear to impact military transfer credit. Selznick's states, "the aims of large organizations are often very broad. A certain vagueness must be accepted because it is difficult to foresee whether more specific goals will be realistic or wise (Selznick, 1984)." It is largely definitional rather than explanatory and informs the literature that values are instilled, not how the institutional characteristics occur (H. Tosi, 2009). Leaders must specify and recast the general aims of his organization so as to adapt them, without serious corruption, to the requirements of institutional survival (Selznick, 1984). The question of study is what is the relationship between these institutional variables and military transfer credit? The variables, although with different Selznick lenses, provide information on a

clear set of defined missions, norms, and values around military transfer credit needed to be

established by leadership. Further, much work is needed for future policymaking to create

transparent institutional practices.

The variables were consolidated into five main categories to compare similarities and

differences in providing analysis of the outcome and best practice recommendations for future

research. The results of these analyses are found in the subsequent chapter. This first variable

focuses on institutional policies and practices for articulation of military transfer credit.

Selznick's theme of formal vs. informal organization provides a lens for looking at the

"institutionalization is a process. "A university has more such leeway than most businesses,

because its goals are less clearly defined and it can give more free play to internal forces and

historical adaptation (Selznick, 1984)." The first variable addresses the natural history of the

institution to understand the roles of formal vs. informal institution. The second variable looks at

how formal vs. informal institutions create policy: what are processes administrators use for

approving military transfer credit? Selznick points to the word "policy" as being loosely used in

administrative circles and is applied to any rule or course of action designed to guide specific

decisions. He says, "such usage is unfortunate to the extent that it blurs the distinction between

routine and crucial experience." Since these policies are not documented by the institution there

may be organized anarchy when making decisions (Cohen et al., 1972) The third variable uses

the theme of thick and thin institutionalization to understand the human capital selection process

and human resource practices for hiring and selecting articulation officers. Selznick says,

"decisions regarding the recruitment of personnel may become part of critical experience. This

occurs when selection must take account of more than technical qualification, as when leading

individuals are chosen for their personal commitment to precarious aims or methods (Cohen et

al., 1972)." A formal system needs to be in place to be an institution. Variable four examines the theme of thick and thin institutions as it is applied to human capital training employees and administering military transfer credit. Training of personnel enters the critical experience of leadership. Selznick points out, "where implementation of policy depends to any considerable extent on the attitudes and ways of thinking of personnel, an effort must be made to translate policy into an 'organization doctrine' and to inculcate these ideas wherever necessary (Selznick, 1984)." Lastly, variable five looks at how policy is implemented -institutional awarding and informing stakeholders (veterans) on institutional decisions. This last variable takes into consideration the theme of character as distinctive competence. "The idea of distinctive competence is not necessarily restricted to the outcome of an organization's peculiar adaptation to its own special purpose and programs."(Selznick, 1984) A general competence may develop, in this case the ability to adapt to solve problems. Awarding credit is perhaps not about administrative efficiency, but the flexibility of the organizational forms that show a commitment to the environment of the organization.

Before discussing data pertaining to the two public universities in this study, I share the background information about the institutions themselves. The next section of this chapter provides background on the two institutions examined in the study.

Background of Institution, Campus A & Campus B

Two research sites were selected for this dissertation; both are California public undergraduate and graduate degree granting colleges and remain anonymous throughout this study. These campuses were selected for their similar backgrounds. Both campuses are located in an urban or suburban environment and are part of California public higher education districts in Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo counties. Each campus has assigned space for veteran student

services as well as at least one fulltime staff member working on behalf of student veterans. During site selection, the researcher applied for IRB approval at the large California Chancellor's Office institution and with each individual college campus. The Assistant Vice Chancellor of Research, Chief Research Officer, and Director of Veterans Affairs at the Chancellor's office reviewed and required anonymity for each of the public campuses where the researcher conducted interviews. Additionally, these three individuals were not allowed to be interviewed directly on the institutional policy since I had previously worked for the institution. The Director of Veterans Affairs agreed in writing to the study, providing a formal written letter from the Chancellor's Office approving each campus's Chief Research Officer further review of the research. At this time, each campus's Chief Research Officer reviewed my application from the Office of the Chancellor and required submittal of a campus IRB before interviews were allowed to take place on their campus. The Virginia Tech IRB approval and Chancellor's Office official letter were included in the application for CASE A and CASE B's approval. The Chancellor's Office establishes policy guidelines for the campuses on military transfer credit and is public, but implementation of the policy on each campus is not clear nor public.

The Office of the Chancellor has a public website under its Active Duty and Veterans Affairs Department that provides public resources for institutional policy on credit for prior learning (Robert, 2018). In April 2018, ACE and the Office of the Chancellor held a campus-wide workshop for articulation officers on credit for prior learning. They asked each campus to ponder four questions, "1) Does your campus have a standard written process for CPL administration? 2) What are your campus's processes? 3) What role do you play? and 4) What processes are working? Where are opportunities for improvement? (A. C. o. Education et al., 2018)."

The Office of the Chancellor provides a comparison of both of the case study campuses. Both campuses were selected due to their similar backgrounds situated in the same institutional system in California.

Figure 13. Quick Facts: Campus B & Campus A

College	Total Enrollment	Estimated Fees	Estimated Cost of Living	Setting	Location
CAMPUS B	23,717	$4,812	$18,609	Large Town	Southern, CA
CAMPUS A	20,944	$6,780	$28,864	Large Town	Central Coast, CA

Source: The California State University, Office of the Chancellor (The Office of the Chancellor, 2017)

Campus A & B History

The brief history of Campus A. The Central Coast of California is a region that lies northwest of Los Angeles County and south of San Francisco and San Mateo counties. Founded in 1901, Campus A is one of two polytechnics in the state of California. The public college is organized into six colleges offering 64 bachelor's and 32 master's degrees. The campus hosts an average of 20,425 undergraduate students and 881 graduate students. Forbes cited Campus A as one of the largest college campuses in the U.S., hosting 9,678 acres and the second largest land-holding university in the state of California ("America's Top Colleges,"). In 1945, Campus A expanded enrollment to 819 students, primarily veterans using the GI Bill (*Timeline of Cal Poly's History*, 2018).

In 1938, the public campus received a million-dollar gift donation from W.K. Kellogg in the form of a Southern California ranch for use as a horticultural training center ("Kellogg West & Cal Poly Pomona History,"). Later in 1949, the W.K. Kelly Foundation offered custody of the ranch to the state of California, to expand the southern branch of the California State Polytechnic College ("Kellogg West & Cal Poly Pomona History,"). Campus B separated from Campus A in 1966, later granted university status in 1972 (California Polytechnic State University). Campus B began as a satellite campus of Case A. In 1966, Campus B became a full independent university.

How did I find interview candidates?

The California State University, Office of the Chancellor provides a veterans' contact list for the public to access regarding veteran enrollment questions for current and prospective students. The website is located under the Troops to College site page to provide information on contacting a campus coordinator by e-mail or phone for pre-advising (Office of the Chancellor, 2017). Information on the campuses for the case study and the contact information for interviewees was publicly available per this site.

The next section discusses each case study for this investigation. These cases were selected because they are public universities with similar demographics for student veteran populations. The objective was to learn more about the characteristics of each public institution and identify similarities or differences in cultural behavior on college campuses. The second objective was to learn about the background and history of policies and procedures established on college campuses to do a cross-case comparison of the institutionalization of these entities. A case study research was used to understand more about potential issues or problems within multiple bounded systems (i.e., a case or college campus administration) (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As an investigator, I explored these systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth

data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., interviews, documents, and reports), to report a case description and case-based themes. Additionally, this chapter addresses information about the cases as background information that leads to a growing conversation on best practices to serve veteran students at public institutions.

CASE: Campus B

In this section, I provide background information that led to the establishment of military transfer credit on the campus, explain the data collection process used to gather the information to learn about this particular campus' administrative role in veteran students transferring military credit, as well as discuss the findings at this particular college campus. Lastly, I explain the similarities and differences found from the analysis of the interviews and the implications for Selznick's lens of institutional theory and the five themes as a way of understanding the administrative role of military transfer credit.

The first part of this chapter discusses the case study of Campus B. Again, this case was selected because it fulfilled the requirements for the selection of cases, and it is one of the most well-known campuses for supporting veteran military transfer credit in the state of California.

In 2011, veteran students at Campus B were surveyed asking, "How do student veterans rate the process of attaining academic credit from Campus B for their military service? 31% said it was difficult to understand" (Nelson et al., 2018). This chapter provides an overview of the policies and practices up until 2009 on campus. The interviews and research fill in the missing information about policy changes, administration of military transfer credit, and ongoing campus efforts.

Campus B History

Variable 1: Institution's policies and practices for articulation of military transfer credit

Campus leaders upheld the university standards of transfer credit policies and practices for student veterans but saw a need to change their policies and practices over time due to the complexity of credit articulation. In 2011, one leader was identified by the Chancellor's Office, campus faculty, and administrators as leading the changes on campus for military transfer credit policy. This leader served two roles as a Campus B graduate student and campus public administrator working in veteran services. The public administrator published *A Policy Evaluation on [Campus B's][10] Veterans Services Initiative*, which was a master's thesis that provided the campus history of past policy practices of military transfer credit through 2011. The paper provided data on student veterans and recommendations to improve military transfer of credit. The concerns about past policies were summarized as an inability to assist student veterans with their concerns on admissions and military transfer credit. The campus valued veterans, but lack of clear institutional policies created frustration for students (Azpeitia, 2010). The interview data revealed institutionalization as a process of instilling value (Selznick, 1957).

The institutional policy and practice begin with the state of California and the Chancellor's Office. In 2006, the Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger created the Troops to College program, designed to attract more veterans to California public universities and colleges by making campuses more veteran friendly. The program seeks to support veterans returning to normal civilian life and transitioning to a professional career. The program is a collaboration between the University of California, California State University, California Community Colleges, the California Department of Veterans Affairs, the Office of the Secretary of Education, the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, and military branches within the state (Labor and Workforce Development Agency, 2016).

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[10] Full Title Changed to honor campus privacy.

In response to the Troops to College initiative, Campus B President directed the Veterans Services Initiative, which established five working groups: Academic Support and Advising, Admissions and Pre-Enrollment, Enrollment Services, Resource Development, and Support Services (*A campus wide commitment to veteran services.*, 2009). Public administrators identify the enactment of the Post-9/11 GI Bill and Troops to College program as important changes to the institutions (University, 2019).

Institutional Adaptations to Policy and Practices

The Military Transfer Credit Workgroup created significant changes to address problems with institutional practices. Many of the problems were a lack of understanding by administrators for pre-admission and enrollment of student veterans. Veterans needed specialized support for financial aid, orientation services on campus, and registration. Campuses administrators needed to adapt their policies and procedures to be responsive to student veterans and institutional practices. The Military Transfer Credit Workgroup consisted predominantly of campus public administrators (e.g. AVP Enrollment Management, Vice Provost, Elke, Jose, and others). The working group found one of the main problems was that campus faculty and staff did not fully understand military course descriptions and were not aware of transitional support services for veterans. One of the recommendations for improvement was for faculty and staff "to attend informational sessions regarding veterans' services the university provides for student veterans (University, 2018)." Faculty and staff understanding the common transitional problems student veterans confront and where on campus veteran services are located can help student veterans perceive university employees as helpful and friendly. In addition, "outreach to Campus B deans and department chairs should be systematically provided over the course of the next academic year (Interview E)."

Another working group recommendation was to invite ACE to come to campus to present. ACE came to co-host a summit on military transfer credit practices on the campus, but it took six years from the initial finding before the campus could get them to come (Veterans Resource Center [VRC] opened in October 2012, ACE Summit held in October 2016).

Although the working group identified problems at the campus, there were no formal changes made to policy and procedures under their leadership. The working group recommendations were later studied by two public administrators on Campus B as a part of data collected for a campus-wide study. There were two events that led to eventual change in Campus B administrative policies: 1) a 2011 survey on veteran services and 2) the creation of a campus Veterans Success Committee (VSC) made up of faculty and staff. The 2011 survey results revealed two major problems from the working group report: 1) there was a lack of direction that led to a disconnect between the initiative's defined goals and results and 2) the campus President's Veterans Services Initiative lacked direction. "Further, there was no visibility to students. After the survey results were discussed with campus administration a Military Transfer Credit Workgroup was formed" (Nelson et al., 2018).

The historical practice of applying GE Area E units is important to note, because it shows campus administration did not understand the impact of electives on veteran students' pathway to degree completion. Prior to 2011, the campus policy was to receive military transcripts and post all credit as elective units. The campus was not proactive in collecting military transcripts. The campus received a student's DD 214. The GE Area E was awarded credit in one of two ways: 1) completion of GE Area E provided the award of four quarter units, plus five quarter elective units or 2) all nine quarter units were applied to the degree as elective if GE Area E was

already complete. The elective credits had no value, other than perhaps bumping a student into a false senior status, which has negative repercussions.

Super Senior status carries negative consequences across all the public California institutions.

> Super Seniors are students who have accumulated more than 100% of the units required for one or more of their academic majors. Excess Unit Seniors are students who have accumulated more than 125% of the units for one or more of their academic majors (and have earned at least 90 units at CAMPUS B). Excess Unit Seniors receive a registration hold each quarter until they graduate. The student is expected to meet with a designated advisor in their department to complete a Graduation Plan Worksheet. (*Super Senior Policy*, 2018)

Additionally, if the Graduation Plan is not complete, the Associate Dean of the College may place the student on academic/administrative probation. Further, if the student deviates from the plan without cause, the student may be subject to academic/administrative disqualification (*Super Senior Policy*, 2018). In 2012, the Chancellor's Office and Campus B implemented the plan during difficult budget times. The Chancellor's Office asked the university to encourage students to graduate as quickly as possible which would "provide more access for incoming freshmen and transfer students by helping current students to graduate in a more timely manner (Puente, 2012)." In 2012, Campus B administration started working on transfer credit guidelines. Since this time, more than 62 campus-wide articulation agreements have been established. These classes are part of military training and experience. A campus public administrator states, "these classes are part of military training and experience but determining if those classes are eligible for college credit is a complex task" (Fong, 2017).

After identifying this policy as a problem, Campus B administrators began to develop a new evaluation policy to prevent awarding all units as elective, which bumps students into an accidental false senior status.

> *"We are considerate of the veterans because elective unit credit causes them to become super seniors. They created a military transfer evaluation form. That form is sent to the registrar's office and they begin the process. The registrar then meets with the student and they make the decision on transfer credit. They might also [get] the department chair to make a recommendation. If a course has been articulated, they post a credit. They post the course credit or if they receive an elective unit"* (Interview E).

Institutional and Campus B Partnership: Highlighting Problems and Working Together to Find Best Practices

Campus B administrators created an informal organization to guide specific decisions on military transfer credit. It became clear that efforts needed to be made to translate policy into an "organizational doctrine (Selznick, 1984)." Campus B and the Office of the Chancellor administration formed a partnership to develop and conduct a survey to determine what other campuses in the system were doing in terms of prior learning experiences and training of student veterans. Conversations between Campus B leadership and The Director of Veterans Affairs at the Office of the Chancellor created a need to gather information on campus policies and practices on articulation. The Chancellor's Office sent a survey, via email to all 23 campuses, directed toward campus Articulation Officers and Credit Evaluators. The Chancellor's Office wanted to find out if they could establish best practices for campus-wide credit articulation. The email including the survey stated, "*results from the survey will help inform policy discussions regarding the assignment of credit for prior learning and prior learning assessment as they*

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support campus institutional systemwide graduation initiatives." The survey achieved a 100%

completion rate by all public administrators on April 26, 2016.

The results from the survey indicated a need for more institutional support from the

Chancellor's Office. The survey results highlighted a strong need for more communication on

policies, procedures, and methods for credit articulation as a formal process. It is clear there is an

organized anarchy when making decisions on policy and administration for military transfer

credit. There is a lack of clear goals, rules, and administrators assigned to handle duties and

tasks. The Chancellor's Office released a statement to the campuses summarizing what was

needed to improve the statewide military transfer process within the institution. It stated the

Chancellor's Office should: 1) provide guidelines for campuses to follow, 2) host training and

provide internal information on policies or trainings on a website for support staff, evaluators,

faculty, and articulation officers, 3) post a list of accepted credits and military course

recommendations for CE, similar to what is current practice for AP, IB and CLEP, so all

campuses have a common policy, and 4) create military career-related degree plans throughout

the institutional system (O'Rourke, 2016).

Additionally, there were five common challenges highlighted across the institutional

higher education system in awarding credit for military education and experience. 1) The first

challenge was that military prior learning did not match major discipline fields. A common

practice on campuses was to award military credit as an elective. The problem is that the unit is

received but does not give specific course credit. 2) The second problem highlighted was

military transfer credits were deducted to avoid exceeding 150 units and placing students in a

Super Senior status. 3) Military or veteran students are responsible for submitting their JST.

Many do not submit them at all or submit them late in their term. 4) There are many military

occupations to research and a variety of credit to offer. 5) ACE credit recommendations are very

general, making it difficult for the campus to assign major discipline credit (O'Rourke, 2016).

From the interview, the participant states,

It was somewhat comforting and at the same time disconcerting to hear that we weren't

alone. The survey reported that other campuses in the system were not doing much more

than we were when it came to military course transfer credit (Interview C).

The Campus B public administrators knew that the campuses in the system should share

an institutional adaptation for policy and practices. Campus B administration were selected by

the system as a leader for taking the first step toward developing best practices. The next section

discusses how Campus B transitioned from awarding elective unit credit as a policy and the

updates made to the campus policy to avoid these problems.

Variable 2: Approval Process of Military Transfer Credits at Institution Campus B

The data found that a major policy shift on campus occurred in 2011. The turning point

for policy was due to data released in *A Policy Evaluation on [Campus B]'s Veterans Services*

Initiative. Two key factors changed institutional policy at Campus B in the last 6-7 years: 1) the

first was the study on Campus B and 2) the second was formalizing staff and faculty support

with the VSC.

After the study was released, the need for campus adaptations to policy and

administration on the topic of veterans transferring credit was clear. The data from the study

revealed there needed to be stronger internal and external institutional communication for

veteran resources on campus. The veteran resource center provided support to veterans, but the

information was not distributed throughout campus. "*A distinct concern veterans voiced was the*

ambiguity they experienced with the process of attaining academic credit for military service. It

is important for student veterans to be fully informed about the process of analyzing military

training and experiences (Interviewee A)"

The Veteran Resource Center on campus boasts a mission to "provide veterans and

military personnel a centralized source for information, support, guidance and community" (P.

California Polytechnic State University, 2018). The center supports veterans in key areas of

admissions, enrollment, financial aid, tuition, student jobs, understanding veteran benefits,

support services, and faculty and staff resources. Elke says the most important factor in

institutional changes to the policy was the partnership between the veteran resource staff and

faculty on their campus to create strong internal and external communication about military

transfer credits.

The campus prioritized improvements to internal and external communications, including

transparency of prior learning credits. There were two main problems with the policy: 1)

veterans were unsure about campus policies and procedures for transferring military credit and 2)

a lack of internal communication and resources provided to faculty and staff to support veterans

with the process.

The campus created the VSC, which took the work of the Military Transfer Credit

Workgroup and data and findings from the 2011 study and changed policy and implementation

for prior learning credit. The Committee consists of faculty and staff from academic colleges and

support services throughout the campus. The selection process is not public, but the interview

highlights the selection process.

> *The committee works with 5 or 6 colleges on the committee and is divided by faculty. The*
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> *dean can designate a selection, or the Veteran Service administrator invites them based*
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> *on their interest toward veteran success. The administrator sees who the movers at the*

college are and who have experience. They give their own time and they are not paid.

Information about who is on the committee is made public on the Veterans Resource

Center website. They are selected by the Veteran Service administrator, who will also

meet with [the] Dean or make a recommendation. The individual starts to develop a

relationship with them and the faculty have to do a lot of outreach and networking. Also,

the rapport of the person on campus to get things done. (Interview A)

Campus B administrators delivered a presentation to systemwide campus veteran articulators

sharing the results of their experience. The campus enlisted faculty help in three main areas of

the process: advocacy, connections, and resources.

The Committee members know how to develop awareness in their respective college or

department. Their skills command respect thought effect efforts in transfer credit articulation. In

the first area of advocacy, committee members are characterized as individuals who are

committed to veteran students. Public administrators do not receive compensation for their time

and are not provided release time, which shows members' dedication to the cause. The second

area of connection is helpful since committee members know how to make things move in their

colleges or departments (especially toward improving new processes) (e.g., grant opportunities,

etc.). The third area is resources, which support veterans on campus. Members have valuable

resources at their disposal. For example, they are able to provide venues for meetings, equipment

when needed, funding for big events (e.g., Veteran Farmer Day, now Veteran Agriculture Day at

Campus B, which includes the USDA). "The commitment to veteran students is there from this

committee, and not just for military transfer credit. This committee is a foundational necessity!"

(Nelson et al., 2018)

Public administrators view the VSC as a key success factor on campus. As another way to improve internal communication, the Veterans Resource Center began to offer monthly seminars open to anyone on campus on veteran resources. The VSC supports these workshops by attending the events, sharing internal communications back to their department on campus, and finding staff and faculty who might be interested in taking a lead to support veteran students. The transfer of military credit is complex and requires faculty, staff, the articulation officer, and veterans to all work together to develop articulation agreements for the transfer of credit. Staff members are able to provide more support to veterans when informed on campus policies and practices to improve a pathway for degree completion.

In a survey completed by Campus B, "Vets indicated that they did not understand or could not attain adequate information during their admissions process at Campus B (Nelson et al., 2018)." One of the major changes created by the VSC was improving external communications for admissions. The 2016 partnership between Campus B and the Office of the Chancellor was a step to learn more about current campus practices, policies, and communications. The survey helped create another major policy change on campus, which was a Request for Evaluation of Military Transcript (REMT). This formalized the process for requesting a military transcript evaluation. The form requested permission prior to posting all elective credit. This change was necessary so students were fully aware that unnecessary elective credit could have negative implications (Nelson et al., 2018). The VRC informed students of the process to apply for military transfer credit at orientation (Robert, 2018).

Findings from the interviews highlighted two key problems: 1) veterans lacked resources on campus and 2) faculty lacked understanding of ACE's credit recommendations. One of the main influencing factors to change resources and communication between veterans and staff and

faculty occurred when a campus faculty member became an articulator at ACE. Faculty selected by ACE are actively teaching in the areas they review. The individuals are placed on teams that assess and validate whether the courses or occupations have the appropriate content, scope, and rigor for college credit recommendations (A. C. o. Education, 2017).

The survey at Campus B provided further evidence for why veterans do not seek faculty support and feel there is a lack of resources on campus. As for a specific concern, the eligibility to receive academic credit for military service resulted in a dilemma for student veterans. The study identified two main difficulties: the ambiguity in the process of attaining academic credit for military service and the uneasiness vets have over whether university staff are able to evaluate their military service into academic credits fairly.

> *Other challenges include the lack of awareness of university student veteran events, the lack of knowledge regarding financial aid (veteran benefits) services, the lack of support and assistance for student veterans suffering from a disability (e.g. post-traumatic stress disorder), the lack of knowledge regarding veterans services on campus on the part of student veterans and university employees, and the lack of adult oriented services for student veterans that attend.* (Interview B)

Additionally, the study identified an important common characteristic of veteran students, which is important to note. The interview participant (Interviewee C) said veterans were "*shy and don't say very much. The students do not ask for their credit to be reviewed and should be asking for further evaluation.*" Resources needed improvements in the area of education for multiple staff, veteran coordinators, and faculty. The VRC provides the organization of the military transfer credit with the REMT and education during orientation about the process on

campus but awarding transfer credit is ultimately a process that involves the articulation officer, faculty, and Department Chair coming to an articulation agreement.

Addressing faculty perspective of ACE credit recommendations, the interview participant says the biggest change on campus has been his ability to shift the perspectives with his colleagues. The campus has developed new policies and practices after he was a reviewer for articulation. In Figure 14, the recognized military transfer credit lists the most recent campus articulation agreements that have become policy for the institution. The administrator realized the campus was not awarding enough credit in their degree area or should be reviewing military credit that can become part of a new campus articulation agreement. This figure is in response to reviews of military credit that will be awarded towards a degree on campus. The new policy was to review ACE credit recommendations, but also to include an additional campus-based review of any credits that did not fall under the ACE category. These reviews would be approved as a new articulation agreement between the campus and veteran, permitting additional credit units. All articulation agreements for new credits would apply to any veteran that had similar coursework. The total number of General Education Area agreements is 287. **"If they do not have a current ACE articulation, the department will work with the veteran to develop an articulation agreement."**

Figure 14. Recognized Military Transfer Credit

Institution	Course-to-Course	General Education Area	Total
American Council on Education (ACE):	18	9	27

Joint Services Transcript (JST)			
Community College of the Air Force (CCAF)	4	22	26
Defense Language Institute (DLI)	0	24+	24
University of Maryland University College Adelphi & Baltimore	5	168	173
U.S. Coast Guard Academy	5	18	23
U.S. Naval Academy	2	0	2
U.S. Air Force Academy	4	7	11
U.S. Military Academy	1	0	1
Total number of agreements	39	248	287

Source: (Nelson, 2018)

Administering a new campus articulation agreement created a major shift in policy

implementation and took a partnership with campus administration, specifically the individual

colleges, Deans, and faculty. Campus B uses ACE recommendations first to award credit, but if a veteran completes a REMT and there is not an articulation agreement, the campus works to create one to award credit. For example, "At military school they go twice as much. A course might be 80 hours, where a similar course at Campus A is only 25 hours." Interview C shared "*advocates taking more time to look at the ACE recommendations first, then going and looking at the topics, submitting the paperwork, reviewing old coursework, lecture notes, syllabi, and other materials*." After experiencing the rigor of the process, the campus faculty were more open to accepting ACE recommendations and Campus B administrators adopted a practice to do further reviews of coursework to award additional credit when appropriate. Having a colleague from campus serve as an ACE recommender provided a trustworthy source for other faculty to learn more about the recommendation process. Through this process department credit towards degree could be evaluated further for example by requesting a syllabi or course lecture notes to compare with department standards when making decisions to award appropriate credit. This change in administration allowed veterans to benefit from a deeper review of military coursework, which may lead to credit articulation agreements or individual credits towards degree.

Variable 3: Human Capital Selection Process and Human Resource Practices for Hiring and Selecting Articulation Officers

The interview data highlighted the selection and hiring practices did not impact campus-based policies on military transfer credit. Most of the interviewees reported that they were unaware of the selection and hiring practices for articulation officers. One campus administration stated, *"The Office of the Registrar oversees hiring. I do not know about it at all (Interview D)."*

The articulation officer on campus was the main point of contact on campus for record keeping on what credits were accepted. The articulation officer shared, *"There is a formal recruitment process. You must have experience in the transfer of credit, academic policies, and knowledge of legislation that impacts transfers and articulation agreements (Interview D)."* The interviews pointed out that articulation officers and human capital selection did not impact policy practices for transfer credits. Articulation officers play a role in awarding credit, but the main influencers were faculty working to award credit for specific courses within their colleges. In an interview I learned more about this process and the role between articulation officers and faculty.

"Department chairs approve specific course credit. Transfer and graduation advisors approve GE area credit. The transfer and graduation advisors can approve military courses, but they are not giving credit for that class just a general area. The Department chairs and the articulation officer create a course agreement for a specific military course. The course agreements award transfer credit (Interview D)."

The course agreements created are credit that is not an elective course. There are multiple campus administrators involved in awarding credit beyond the articulation officer.

Variable 4: Human Capital Training employees and administering military transfer credit

The lack of knowledge on the part of faculty and staff on campus can hinder student veterans' transitioning process into the college environment (DiRamio, 2008). Internal communication needed improvements on campus to make policy changes. The Veteran Resource Center took the lead on providing training for campus employees and informing faculty and staff about veterans' services on campus, which include military transfer credit as one area. One administrator discusses the institutional changes to training employees on updated policies and procedures.

"The veterans center does a mini summit on how to review a military transfer credit. We have seminars for graduation advisors. We have faculty and staff trainings every quarter. It is important to be a broken record, so people remember to include military transfer credit (Interview E)."

In 2013, the VRC began hosting events for employees to communicate, collaborate, and create a forum to support veteran services on campus. The events range in topic from transitioning to campus, "Boots to Broncos," "Veterans Mental Health 101," and Tips to Advising Student Veterans. The VRC provides many different human capital resources for faculty and staff training, but this dissertation focuses on learning more about specific military transfer credit events.

There was a two-day conference held on October 20-21, 2016, hosted by Campus B and the Office of the Chancellor entitled, "Military Transfer Credit Summit." This event is important to note, because it was a first step toward learning about policy and current practices on campus. "Indoctrination becomes critically important when policies are insecure (Selznick, 1984)." Policymakers at each of the California college campuses were able to absorb the new points of view and integrate ideas that were used at other campuses. Campus B shared how their institution needed to include more opportunities on campus to train employees about military transfer credits. The campus described how they created a website for the campus community, administrators and veterans, with resources and information student veterans may need both in and out of the classroom. These resources include academic related support, veteran liaisons across campus, calendar of faculty and staff workshops, and past presentations and publications (P. California Polytechnic State University, 2018).

"We have a website dedicated to transfer credit that is through the registrar's webpage. There is a link on the last paragraph that is a transfer guide to veterans. This is a step by step guide. We realized that veterans like a check box where they can have everything, they need to know about transferring military coursework, language (defense language), or DANTES. This whole process was the result of a change after 2014 when we had [an employee] start. All of the documents were revised a few times. Students send a JST to the registrar. Students must fill out a campus form asking the campus to evaluate their transcripts for credit (Interview D)."

In April 2018, the system hosted a summit open to all campuses on Military Transfer credit. Participants included ACE, Center for Education Attainment and Innovation, who presented "Setting the Stage for Implementation." The questions that were asked at the end of the presentation reinforce there is still a need for research at other campuses and a grey area when it comes to public policy. The questions asked were:

- Does your campus have a standard written process for credit for prior learning (CPL) administration?

- What are your campus's processes?

- What role do you play?

- What processes are working? Where are opportunities for improvement?

One of the biggest areas highlighted from changing forms and procedures is training staff to understand why this is important for veteran students. Campus B participated in the Office of the Chancellor all campus workshop sharing their model of using a working group made up of leaders on campus of faculty and staff to create new articulation agreements between their colleges and the articulation officer to show one way that worked to make changes.

"Faculty need to lead the mission. It cannot be the veterans center alone. It needs to be the staff. I would not be successful without a team of staff who are well aware of the problems, process, and articulation officer. I created a veteran's success committee. The committee are leaders made up of five or six colleges on campus and are divided by the faculty, the dean can make a designation, or you use your own relationship with faculty to have them on the team. I see who the movers at the college are who have experience. They give their own time and are not paid. The faculty have to do a lot of outreach and networking. They have the repoire of a person on campus that can get things done (Interview D)."

The workshop offered a group discussion and open dialogue to learn about other campus processes, gaps in campus-level policies and processes, and some of the challenges. The next section discusses how institutions inform veterans about military transfer credit once their paperwork is complete.

Variable 5: Institutional Awarding & Informing Stakeholder (Veteran) on Institutional Decisions to Award Transfer Credit

Current admissions practices at Campus B include the office of the registrar, department of student's degree, and veteran student success center. The student applies to the campus. The campus admits the student. The student declares veteran status and is referred to the Veteran Resource Center. Campus B provides veterans with a campus credit transfer guide during orientation (in person and in the e-orientation). The guide was established as a response to 31% saying the attainment of credit process on campus was difficult to understand.

Student veterans go through orientation and learn either in person or virtually about the campus policies and practices for transferring military transfer credit. Afterward, they submit paperwork, including the Request for Evaluation of Military Transcript (REMT), and work with

both the Veteran Resource Center and a campus transfer advisor. The transfer advisor submits the paperwork to the articulation officer on campus. Either the articulation officer approves the credit using the ACE recommendations or sends back unapproved credit. After initial review, any unapproved credit may be discussed as a potential application for a new articulation agreement on campus. The articulation process is a partnership between the student, faculty, department, and articulation officer. At any point in the process, the veteran can petition for their prior learning credit to be reviewed and re-considered.

The process of awarding credit and informing the student is a big change in Campus B's policy. They worked hard to improve communications between the veteran student and campus administrators from the start of the process with applying to the school, receiving acceptance, and creating a degree plan with their department. The largest change in communications came from the work of the VRC. Students are assigned a transfer advisor within their department and are either assigned credit from one of the updated articulation agreements on campus or may petition the department for a new articulation agreement if prior learning credits fit the requirements. All articulation agreements are additional opportunities for credit toward a degree on Campus B.

Campus B administration improved their communication with veteran admissions by recommending pre-admission counseling to all students that self-identify as a veteran. *"The registrar reviews the credit and they work with the articulation officer on credit. They also review GE credit evaluations requirements" (Interview E).* The change made on campus to improve veterans entering as a student was recommending pre-admission counseling. Additionally, in 2011, another key change to provide stronger communications was to provide an e-orientation for veterans.

"Veterans resource center has [a veteran orientation] video posted on their website. For the online portion of orientation, we introduce the transfer form. Veterans that go through the orientation in person see the video. The registrar's office website also has it posted. We also do a faculty training as well that includes information what is included in the video (Interview E)."

In May 2017, Campus B was awarded a $2 million California Award for Innovation in Higher Education Program joint grant initiative from ACE/Walmart Success for Veterans. The grant provided Campus B with $100,000 to fund the e-orientation program, which is designed to provide student veterans with a comprehensive and personalized explanation of the university and its resources. The goal of the grant is to develop "a streamlined system that seamlessly converts military transfer credit," which "achieves two goals: eliminate academic redundancy and reeducate the time to earn a degree" (Fong, 2017).

Providing veterans with an introduction to the institution plays an important role in educating student stakeholders on policies and procedures. There is a "distinctive competence" within the organization "as an institution," that is concerned with the commitments that have faced both internal and external pressures. As soldiers transition to students their GI Bill funded education is supported by the community as a public resource. Institutions of higher education as "infused with value," and become participants in the moral order, requiring competence, intentionality, and accountability (Selznick, 1994). Many veterans do not transition out of the military in time to attend traditional orientation sessions, which often take place several weeks before classes begin (O'Herrin, 2011). Veterans often require specific information on benefits or other resources that may not be included for traditional incoming students. As moral agents, administrators are responsible for providing information on credit transfer to stakeholders. One of the main ways information is provided to student veterans prior to arriving on campus is

through orientation. However; as decisions are made informally and the institution lacks transparent policies that may be included in orientation it is barely institutionalized. Further, there is a competence problem for the organization that infuses administrators, faculty, and staff with a moral authority to create clear institutional policies and practices for veteran students. Governance becomes important as members of the organization are embedded in the community.

CASE: Campus A

Military Credit Transfer at Campus A

Campus A administrators operated under a policy that accepted all veteran transfer credits as elective units. The institutional history for credit articulation was one set policy to accept all units as electives. Campus administrators were unaware that military transfer credits could be applied towards a degree, because the policy in place only permitted general elective units as transferable. The campus did not train employees on credit articulation and did not examine policies for best practices or look at other ways to award units. The Office of the Chancellor's systemwide summit in April 2018 was a turning point for the campus in learning about current practices. The Office of the Chancellor presented Campus B leadership to all the 23 campuses as a model to follow best practices. This influenced Campus A administration to change its policies. Much like Campus B administrators found with its policies in 2011, Campus A administration realized its policies were not the best administrative practice for student veteran credit articulation. The campus administration and leadership did not realize there were other options for awarding credit or assisting veterans with credit articulation that could apply toward a faster path toward degree completion. The interviewees even said, *"They were not great in the past"* (Interview D).

Additionally, military resources and services are brand new on campus beyond transfer credit. The Office of the Registrar's public website has a clear direction for veteran students to contact the veterans' success website. The university clearly separates applicants and concerns for veterans, including Veteran's Benefits and Registration Status for Vets as a separate policy and has designated staff for institutional consideration (Cal Poly Office of the Registrar, 2017).

Moreover, in the last year, changes have been significant at Campus A in providing veteran support. The campus is taking clear steps to learn from other campuses to create more resources for future students. Recently, the campus established a Veterans Success Center and opened its door to a separate campus space for veteran students in April 2018. The center is located directly on campus to increase access to students, providing a physical space for community resources for veteran success including a study lounge, coffee, social events, space for the student veterans organization, and printing (Cal Poly Veteran Success Center, 2017). Per a public website, the stated mission is to provide "assistance to prospective and enrolled student veterans and dependents in their transition to college. The center assists in accessing educational benefits, campus resources, leadership activities, and transitioning into the civilian work world" (S. L. O. California Polytechnic State University, 2018). The campus is taking steps to create adaptations to institutional policies for veteran services on their campuses, including transferring credit, but there is a lot of work left to do.

Variable 1: Institutions Policies and Practices for Articulation of Military Transfer Credit

Campus A interview participants D and E described the institutional policy and practice to award credit, as *"tromping through the process."* The administrator's description shows a "loose coupling" and even "organized anarchy" of an organization. Perhaps one that is barely institutionalized when it comes to a lack of a formal organization or rational decision making

process (Cohen et al., 1972; Selznick, 1994). The history of the institutional policy is to award every veteran nine units of credit. After attending institutional wide conferences in San Marcos and Sacramento the administration realized the current institutional campus policies were hindering financial aid and student status on campus. The policies were outlined by two administrators in the interview.

"We know our policies are not great. We give every student 9 units of credit off a DD214. We just found out we should not be giving credit out like that from that form. Knowing what we have done in the past is not ideal and we are making an effort to make changes. JST is the new transcript we are looking at for how to assess transfer credit. Our campus only admits credit to a specific degree or major. The current policy is the registrar makes the recommendation to the department if they can award credit. We were only giving 3 units if the department approved it towards degree. The rest of the credit all went towards elective units (Interview E)."

The office of the registrar is the articulation officer for veteran transfer credit. Due to the policy to accept all units up to nine credits, there is no formal training on campus for military transfer credit. Campus A highlights an organization that has a mission and policy in place for military transfer credit, but that stated goals are too vague and abstract to be capable of determining policy choices (Selznick, 1994).

When veterans enter as a new student the first point of contact for transfer and admissions for military credit is VSC staff. The staff distribute forms and paperwork and the veteran is responsible to getting the forms to the office of the register to request a review of military transfer credit towards degree. There are three veteran-specific categories of paperwork administered by VSC staff: 1) Benefit paperwork to submit, 2) Other Important Documents to

submit, and 3) Other Recommendations. This dissertation is concerned with learning more about the second category of Other Important Documents to Submit.

The form listed on the public website for new student veteran checklist identifies Documents to Submit to Admission and Records as military transfer credit information in one of the categories. Within the category of Admission and Records, there are three recommended tasks for veterans to complete.

1) Submit your final transcripts from your previous institution to Admission and Records (submit electronically or hand carry)

2) Submit military transcripts to Admission and Records for review

3) Obtain Institutional or IGETC certification from your previous institution. This may qualify you as exempt for up to two (3-unit) classes.

Source: (*New Cal Poly Student Veteran Checklist*, 2018)

After discussions with the Office of the Chancellor and attendance at the systemwide working group session, campus administrators realized that the policy of awarding all veterans the same nine units of credit as an elective was not a good institutional practice.

> *When we first responded to veterans, we were not the best example. We hope to be a good case for your study of how military transfer credit was not working. When we get an ACE transcript, we feel like we are flapping our hands and are not sure of what to do with it. We have a very low comfort level of what to do with it. Even once we are up and trained on the description of the transcript, we are unsure of what to do. We do not immediately see how or what to transfer. We are unsure of how the results are received into the units to degree because of the department curriculum and we are not sure it will*

improve time to degree. The description on the ACE transcript and military guide may

not also tell the whole story. (Interview D)

Campus A administrators were aware that Campus B administrator's policies are a better

model than their own current practice to accept all units. Campus A recognized that there was a

difference between their "organized anarchy" in policy decisions vs. an informal organization in

Campus B that was created as a system of administration. The office of the registrar officials is

working on a policy solution to view the recommendations of the Office of the Chancellor and

Campus B's policy model to see if their current practices are negatively impacting student

graduation outcomes. At the time of the interview, Campus A administrators said its current

practice does not have many credits given toward degree. The policy awards three units to go

toward elective lifelong learning units and the other units as free elective credit. The major

portion of work might go into a petition process with the department, but those units usually are

awarded as electives. The campus is looking at Campus B's administrative practices to engage

more faculty, deans, staff, and its own office of the registrar's staff to discuss how to award more

units toward degree. The data from the interview found that the current practices were not

working, but there was still a lot of work needed to enact a new policy and practice.

It was clear from the interview that the ACE military guide was confusing for the

registrar's office. Since there is not a formal training process on campus to understand the

military guide, it is understandable why administrators felt they were "*tromping through the*

process." Future discussions need to include more training from administrators at ACE, the

Chancellor's Office, or Campus B administrators to understand better practices about offering

credits toward degree. The process to accept military transfer credit beyond elective units is still

a grey area for the administrators, which makes it challenging to communicate clearly

institutional processes to entering veteran students.

Variable 2: Approval Process of Military Transfer Credits at Institution

The April 2018 summit with the Office of the Chancellor was a turning point for Campus

A policies and approval of veteran credit for future policymaking. Selznick points out in the

transformation of organizations into institutions there is a formal quest for "institutional"

solutions to problems of economy and coordination (Selznick, 1994). In order to make sense of

how policies are administered there must be a step towards institutionalization. This is clear for

Campus A after the summit when the administrators began to see the need "thick

institutionalization" with for steps towards goals and rules; a chain of command; channels of

communication: for the purpose of creating articulation agreements. During the summit,

Campus B and the Office of the Chancellor administration and leadership partnered to present

best practices for veteran articulation. After the summit, Campus B administration newly focused

on the importance of policies and practices for veterans on campus. During the interview, the

administrator pointed out there were two main reasons why they needed to look at other

campuses and leadership practices for approval of military transfer credit. The first was the

impact of student financial services. *"The Chancellor's Office gathering showed me that it could*

mess with veteran student financial benefits (Interview E)." The second area of impact was in

understanding resources for creating policies and procedures for veteran military transfer.

> *"I recently learned about the ACE military transcript. I just learned about the military*
>
> *course guide that goes into learning objectives. I hope the department can take that*
>
> *information and use a more informed decision to admit credit for a course. It is very*

exciting for us to learn that there are course descriptions and we feel there is a lot more

information available now to help make decisions (Interview E)."

The veteran resource leaders at Campus B provided a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the changes to their own policy and practices. One of the biggest changes outlined that impacted Campus A were partnerships on campus. Campus B administration's biggest impact in policy changes and implementation were creating a Veteran Success Committee to communicate about new articulation agreements on campus and adapt resources for veterans. Additionally, the need for a veteran resource center on campus to address specific veteran issues for pre-admission and enrollment was a way of creating support staff to assist directly with any resources on campus. Administrators from Campus A saw Campus B's model of veteran resource center leadership creating change in current policies and practices; including adapted resources to work alongside the leadership of faculty, department deans, the office of the registrar, and other public administration to create more ways to offer veterans credit toward degree. The office of the registrar stated,

"We are working on new policies and practices now. We know that we need to partner with a veteran success center lead. There are changes from the Chancellor's Office that are being shared as a system, so we can all be on the same page. Our campus is a work in progress. (Interviewee D)."

As previously mentioned, the current practice to accept all credits as electives was acknowledged by the campus as needing a change. The current approval process created two problems for student veterans: 1) hurt their financial and GI benefits and 2) in some cases pushed students into Super Senior status. The GI Bill does not always offer enough benefits to complete a degree. The GI Bill is typically worth 36 months of classes (Guina, 2012). If units transfer only

as elective, this means there is a longer time toward degree completion that may exhaust GI Bill funds.

Campus A administration is focused on changing policies to accept all credits as electives and working with campus faculty and staff on new best practices. Another factor that maintained the current practice up until April 2018 was that Campus A administrators did not receive any veteran complaints about the policy or indications that there were different ways of handling military transfer units. "*They have not been getting any feedback on credits administered from veterans*" (Interviewee E). The campus was under the assumption that they were helping their veteran students with the current policy practice.

The campus is working to make adaptations to their policies by looking at Campus B as a model, [with] support from the Office of the Chancellor and getting more education on how to implement these policies on campus. The main thing they are changing is to be more connected with the student on what they need. The impact of the GI Bill funds is the only big area that was detrimental to how the units were [awarded]. By trying to [do] them a favor, they realized they were doing them a disservice. Most of us are comfortable glancing at the transcripts but realize that it needs to be more of a case-by-case basis. We hope to get more advertising of how we award credits with a new policy to enroll more vets since the population now is low vets. (Interviewee E)

The approval process needs improvement on campus. One of the basic steps that needs clarification on a policy from the institution is veteran awareness on submitting the JST.

"Not everyone knows to send the JST; they have a DD214 for all vets. They want to improve the process to know that they should always submit the JST" (Interviewee D)

The JST shows the military transfer units that are potentially eligible for transfer units. The campus is committed to improving this process as a step toward new policy practices.

Variable 3: Human Capital Selection Process and Human Resource Practices for Hiring and Selecting Articulation Officers

The findings from the research included that the selection and hiring practices were not relevant to public policy on military transfer credit. Most of the interviewees reported that they were unaware of the selection process and that articulation officers were not the decision makers for credit acceptance. The campus has multiple individuals approving and administering different types of transfer credit.

"The articulation officer, who's primary role is to do an assessment between the California community college and campus to accept transfer credit [nonmilitary credit]. However; whatever they cannot do [military credit]to transfer falls on the evaluator. For veterans [on campus], all of the evaluation falls to the registrar. If we were a campus with a high veteran population that would be different. At [our campus] we are not near a military base, not impacted, and not a commuter school, so the veteran population is low. (Interview D)."

The articulation officer on campus was the main point of contact on campus for record keeping on what credits' acceptance, but the registrar's office made decisions to award credit.

Variable 4: Human Capital Training Employees and Administering Military Transfer Credit

The April 2018 institutional systemwide event changed the learning process for the Office of the Registrar on campus. This was the first training an employee completed to learn more about methods and policy practices used at other institutional campuses. Since this time, the Office of the Chancellor Director of Veterans Resources reached out to two individuals in the

Registrar's office to create an open dialogue about policies and practices on its campus. The interview pointed out there is limited information on policies and procedures to accept credit beyond the policy to accept all nine units as elective credit. If veterans petition the department for degree towards a major the Department looks at the credit, but more than often it gets awarded as an elective unit.

"We do not have any training for advisors or faculty. As soon as policies are nailed down the registrar will offer a formal training. But for now, we will train as we go. We are working on developing a training and might look into the process of how it might [award] credit. (Interview E)."

Administrators believed the current policy practices were helping veterans by accepting all military transfer units as elective credits. Now, they acknowledge there is a lot of work needed on their campus to better understand how institutional policies impact veterans and how employees need to be trained on policies to award prior learning credit.

Variable 5: Institutional Awarding & Informing Stakeholder (Veteran) on Institutional Decisions to Award Transfer Credit

The institutional awarding process is a simple policy. The current policy is that all communications about institutional awarding of units is through the office of the registrar. The office of the registrar makes decisions on credit and discusses the outcome with the stakeholder, in this case the student. Campus A administrators expressed their biggest concerns with misunderstanding institutional awarding credits was uncertainty of how it impacts stakeholders. *"We are unsure it will improve time to degree (Interview D)."*

Although the campus has a VSC, the staff does not have information on how credits are awarded or how students are informed. The VSC is informed about what paperwork to suggest

the student submit but does not have a current role in informing veterans about the campus policy and process for credit for transfer other than to refer them to the Documents to Submit to Admission and Records. When I interviewed staff at the VSC about the current policy on military transfer credit the response was, "*I am unaware of the process on campus. I think they approve all of them. When someone turns in military transcripts, they are automatically giving them credit off the bat.*" (Interview F).

The problem identified by the VSC administration is that there is not a lot of research for prior institutional policy practices and information on how to improve the process. "*The biggest problem with military transfer credit at the campus is that there is not a formal policy process for accepting credit. We do not have a formal military credit transfer process on campus*" (Interview F).

The VSC on campus was one step the campus took in April 2018 to create resources for veterans learning about institutional policies for awarding credit. "*The Veterans Success Center provides assistance to prospective and enrolled student veterans and dependents in their transition to college. The center assists in accessing educational benefits, campus resources, leadership activities, and transitioning into the civilian work world*" (S. L. O. California Polytechnic State University, 2018). Although the VSC is a step in the right direction, the staff need to be trained on policy and practices for military transfer credit.

On Campus A the office of the registrar informs stakeholders (veterans) on awarded articulation credit. The current policy on campus is every student entering must select a degree of study. If veterans submit Documents to Admissions and Records for transfer review decisions are posted in a student campus portal. In the interview, this process was explained further,

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"Students are admitted into a specific major. All transfer students are assessed, so they have all of their transfer work. Once they have approved any transfer credit, they send an email for review. Students have access to a campus portal. They can see the data and access the information. This part we feel we do very well (Interview D)."

Students communicate with the institution on decisions made on the transfer assessment. In the interview I asked if there was an oversight process to check or evaluate awarded articulation credit. The office of the registrar shared the policy practice,

"Students have several places to go back and ask the advising center, college directly, major department or faculty advisor, or veterans student success center. There are places where they can push back to the registrar. The benefits for the students may be impacted. If we feel like it is out of our area of expertise, we ask the department to reassess the credit (Interview E)."

<u>Discussion of the Cases Comparatively</u>

Challenges Veterans Face as they Transition to Institutions of Higher Education

Selznick observed that management depends on self-conscious application -and patient testing- of organizational theories (Selznick, 1984). Institutions are complex, which is why this study applied four themes to try to understand the variables for insight into administration and policy. The following section looks at Campus A and Campus B to compare similarities and differences in each of the variables.

Comparison of Variable 1: Institutions Policies and Practices for Articulation of Military Transfer Credit

Due to the growing influx of veteran enrollment in universities and colleges after World War II, campus administrators faced the issue of admissions, transfer credit, and special services to provide for their needs. A similar influx of veteran enrollment is repeating itself with the

increase of student veterans after the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Institutional policies and practices need

to adapt to meet growing demands of veteran students on campuses (Jennifer Steele, Nicolas

Salcedo, & Coley, 2010). Institutions of higher education found themselves struggling to

accommodate many of the transitional needs that their student veteran population required to

obtain academic success (O'Herrin, 2011). Many campuses have student veteran services offices,

administrators, or, depending on the student body, a fulltime staff member who can help with

navigating admissions, understanding the GI Bill and benefits, or mental and physical health

complexities.

 The research revealed Campus B administration as an example of an enacted conception,

emphasizing that effective leaders can define and defend the organization's institutional values—

its distinctive mission (Selznick, 1957). The dissertation found that leaders on campus need

support from the institution to confront the multitude of issues on campus and have success with

policy changes and adaptations. On Campus B the policy is, *"to work with the student to get*

credit that is not necessary an elective (Interview E.)" This is a difference with Campus A's

current policy to, *"accept all nine units as elective units. (Interview B)."* The findings from these

two cases highlight the nature of institutions of higher education need to adapt their policies and

practices since the GI Bill's inception. After working with campuses across the system, an

administrator at Campus B stated, *"most of the veterans centers on campus only have one single*

staff. In order to bring awareness to the issue you must make people aware. For example, the

Chancellor's Office is talking to [campus] administration. Multiple people were involved on

[our] campus to know about the issue and how to help veterans on campus (Interview E)."

 Institutions need to provide clear and transparent policy for students to understand their

responsibility in the transfer application process. Student success is likely to be achieved with

additional support from campus leadership and resources to support veterans transferring

military credit. The findings from Campus A show multiple administrators and campus leaders

are needed in policy change and implementation. Veterans often arrive at institutions of higher

education with an appreciation for academic study and opportunity, but the institution needs to

provide support for transfer success. The experiences of veterans aid them in maturing and

discovering a new appreciation for higher academic studies (DiRamio, 2008). The unique nature

of more veterans transferring credits and entering college after the Post 9/11 GI Bill calls for an

organic process of continued policy review that meet both institutional and student veteran needs

as they work towards degree completion.

<p style="text-align:center">**Comparison of Variable 2: Approval Process of Military Transfer Credits at**</p>

Institution (Campus A)

The findings from the interviews identified both Campus A and Campus B with similar needs

to increase transparency for their approval process of military transfer credit. Both campuses

highlighted the need to change the policy based on two common areas that impacted both the

institution and the student veteran. The first area impacted was student financial services.

Campus A and B both acknowledged the approval of all transfer units as elective credit impacted

financial aid on campus and put students into a false Super Senior status.

The second area of impact was in understanding more resources were needed to create

policies and procedures for veteran military transfer. Campus interviews both highlighted the

need for an increase in transparency of institutional policies. The interviews identified short-term

goals for communication with veterans and additional staffing resources to increase transparency

for the approval process of military transfer credits at institutions. One key finding from this

research is the importance of improving communication on campus and between the veteran

student and staff assisting with credit articulation for prior learning. A necessary change

identified by Campus B is the inclusion of a REMT on each campus within the institution. The

study found that this form created a formal process for requesting a military transcript

evaluation. The entering veteran reviews the form so they are aware they can submit credit

toward their degree of study and potentially allow for a faster path toward graduation.

Additionally, the REMT provides an additional resource for the student and institutional

administration through a check and balance system. The process includes communication with

the student's academic department, transcript evaluator, or articulation office, and the student is

an active participant in the process by seeing the results of the credit as accepted or not accepted.

Students are clear on institutional decisions for credit prior to the campus posting any units as

elective credit or credit toward a degree. Including additional resources and steps for the student

veteran approval process increases transparency.

Campus A and B provided information on resources for current policies to educate veterans

on academic credit for transfer units and the admissions process. The campus administration

discussed the history of institutional policies creating a challenge for student veterans. The

challenge was a lack of understanding of the process for both the administration awarding the

units and the student veteran of attaining academic credit. Additionally, the transfer process was

difficult for veterans to understand.

The major changes in current policy and practice were made by leadership and

administration at Campus B to create a working group made up of staff, faculty, administrators,

and campus-based leaders in the colleges. By creating new policies to require two orientations

for students: the general incoming campus orientation and a separate orientation for veterans to

review resources and transfer credit policies they increased awareness for military transfer credit

policies for this specialty community. Further, policy was changed to create an option for an online orientation in place of an in-person orientation. The website can provide orientation in the format of a webinar if students cannot attend in person. This change also provides the same information to administrative staff to inform them about campus-based policies on transfer credit. Another major change in policy was made to provide more transparency on campus policies by using the student veteran web page and student transfer advisors as an informational. The veteran web page can help vets understand what information is needed to petition for academic credit from their campus for their military service and what the institution recognizes as academic credit.

The findings from the interviews with Campus A were the current policies and practices to accept all nine units as electives needed further adaptation. Campus A recognized policies and practices by Campus B leadership as a better method for the institution and the student veterans. Campus A and B both mentioned more training across the state systems was needed to continue to share resources, so campuses were not accepting credits as elective and avoiding false Super Senior status. Additionally, both campuses agreed that more support from the Office of the Chancellor was needed to learn about current policy practices on campuses across the system. The Chancellor's Office was a necessary part of the leadership role for providing support on policy making and setting institutional norms and foundations on higher education veteran policies. Lastly, sharing articulation agreements, such as Campus B's example, should be a part of a common system for accepting credit at the systemwide level. Articulation agreements would allow other campuses, like Campus A, to learn more about transfer credit that may be accepted for credit as applied to a specific major instead of an elective unit. The current policy process is complex, and needs continued sharing across campuses.

Comparison of Variable 3: Human Capital Selection Process and Human Resource

Practices for Hiring and Selecting Articulation Officers

Both cases highlight the selection and hiring practices were not relevant to public policy on military transfer credit. There is a lack of clearly defined roles within both institutional systems. Selznick's lens of thick and thin institutionalization shows this is a thin institution, because the roles are barely defined (Selznick, 1994). The roles of the articulation officers were difficult to understand from an internal and external point of view. There is a communication problem with the lack of identity of roles on campuses. There appeared to be a lack of formally defined roles that would define a formal system. As discussed in the ethnoautobiographic chapter, in several instances the Chancellor's Office referred me to individuals that did not handle military credit. Additionally, the public websites were not clearly defined by their titles and roles for public administrators. Prospective and student veterans need clearly defined public administrators to contact for support handling their military transfer credit. Selznick points out the recruitment of personnel may become part of critical experience. The "social composition of the staff significantly affects the interplay of policy and administration, personnel selection cannot be dealt with as routine management practice (Selznick, 1984)." The role of administrators may shape policies and practices. All interviewees reported that they were unaware of the selection and hiring practices for articulation officers. On Campus A the findings were the office of the registrar made decisions to award military credit. Articulation officers were not a part of policymaking on Campus A. Additionally, the articulation officer on Campus B was the main point of contact on campus for record keeping on what credits were accepted, but the decisions were made by both faculty and the officer. There was a shared practice for creating new articulation agreements, but little was known about human capital selection practices.

Comparison of Variable 4: Human Capital Training Employees and Administering

Military Transfer Credit

Campus A and B's participation in the April 2018 institutional systemwide event

highlighted a need to create new institutional policies for training employees to award military

transfer credit. The findings were there was limited information on policies and procedures on

Campus A to accept credit beyond the policy to accept all nine units as elective credit. As

pointed out earlier, the lack of policy beyond award all nine units was acknowledged by Campus

A administrators as an area that needed further work. This work includes, but is not limited to,

creating new institutional policies and training employees in order to better understand awarding

prior learning credit. The case of Campus A reinforces there is a communication problem to

establish a "thick" institutionalization. A clear lack of explicit goals and rules; a chain of

command; channels of communication; and contractual arrangements (Selznick, 1994) are not

seen in the Campus A institution.

On Campus B, I found there was a clear role in human capital training through leadership

at the Veteran Resource Center. Administrators took the lead on providing training for campus

employees and informing faculty and staff about veterans' services on campus, which include

military transfer credit as one area. Creating communications and establishing a working group

was highlighted as a model to train staff across campus. This model for training is explained

further by a Campus B administrator.

"[A veteran resource center administrator at Campus B] established a working group.

Open communication made a huge difference. The staff on the committee were able to train their

departments with what was going on with veterans on campus. This created a good workflow for

evaluation. Before this we did not have a process. Now we have a meeting once a month to

update the working group. There is another small set of staff that meets once a week. [The

articulation officer] shares with the smaller group how many agreements they have and what

they are working on. As of March 2019, the campus has created 287 new agreements. 248 are

for a GE credit course, and 38 are for another specific course requirement on their campus. For

example, it would be an engineering course or something that satisfies a course or a pre-req for

a core requirement (Interview D)."

Both Campus A and B acknowledge there is still work that needs to be done to create

more communication and train staff. Wherein Campus A had limited resources and

administrators supporting military transfer credit, Campus B is an example of an informal

structure. Administrators on campus supplemented the formal campus system with an informal

structure, comprised of relationships (faculty, staff, and administrators), practices (new

articulation agreements), and social interactions (veteran service centers). In one sense, Campus

B's informal system begins to move from organization to institution to community through the

ideal of creating a campus "veteran friendly" physical location on campus and supporting

community of students, faculty, and administrators (Selznick, 1994).

Comparison of Variable 5: Institutional Awarding & Informing Stakeholder (Veteran) on

Institutional Decisions to Award Transfer Credit

Campus B leadership influenced Campus A administration to make changes to award and

inform stakeholders of their institutional policies and procedures. Administration on Campus A

emphasizes,

"[Campus B] has fired under us to better serve the veteran population. We are improving

a public process with veterans to learn how we can better serve them. We want them to be able

to move along with credit, but also need to make sure they are prepared for the next coursework.

We would also like to improve [our campus] as a veteran campus. Besides meeting with the Chancellor's office and leadership [Campus B] is working to better collaborate with each other and serve veterans (Interview D)."

Both campuses note there is still work and change that needs to happen to create new policies and inform stakeholders. Campus A and B both discussed a need to adapt information on policies that was clear for incoming and current students on expectations for transfer veteran students. The major changes on Campus B came from leadership on the VSC staff since they were the first point of contact for many veterans on campus. On Campus A administration in the office of the registrar learned about changes from Campus A leadership at the VSC and the Office of the Chancellor. Both campuses identified leadership, administration, faculty, and staff need to be a part of the military transfer credit policymaking. Policies need to be adapted and evaluated on a regular basis to inform stakeholders of updates to policies and student expectations.

Clear and publicly available guidelines for veterans are a part of future institutional guidance and best practices. Campus A and B's relevant history of where the policy started and how it changed is important to learn about institutional adaptation. The systemwide Office of the Chancellor leadership played a role in Campus A administration acknowledging Campus B leadership model should be followed. Campuses are looking to the institutional systemwide leadership for more guidance and best practices. A statement by an administrator at Campus B notes, "*We need more guidance on military transfer credit provided to the campuses from the systemwide level (Interview B)."*

The Chancellor's Office acknowledges that, "there is still a lot of work needed on policies on military transfer credit (O'Rourke, 2017)." The Chancellor's Office has also made steps toward

providing more resources for campuses that was made publicly available on their website. It is helpful to include these findings as a step towards policy adaptation provided by institutional leadership. The findings from a 2016 internal survey sent to veteran articulation officers to campuses highlighted areas across the systemwide campus that needed improvement to serve veteran stakeholders on current policies including:

- The Office of the Chancellor should provide guidelines for campuses to follow.

- Improve training and establish a dedicated website for evaluators, faculty, and articulation officers.

- Post a list of military course recommendations for GE, similar to AP, IB, and CLEP, so all know.

- Create military career-related degree plans throughout the systemwide campus.

Additionally, in 2017, the Office of the Chancellor adapted its veteran's website to give further guidance for the broader policies on campuses to serve campus administrators in creating campus based military transfer credit policies. The Chancellor's Office (O'Rourke, 2017) provides veterans the following guidance on transferring benefits to their stakeholders:

- Be in charge of your education and contact campus Veterans Services offices. Visit the campus, ask questions. What support services are provided? (E.g., VRC, social space, special admissions)

- Submit JSTs to the registrar's office.

- Avoid impacted majors and campuses if possible.

- Double-check all guidance you receive.

In 2018, the Chancellor's Office identified the key areas below as needing work across all institutions. Specialty support at institutional campuses across the system include:

- Benefit certification and advisement (all 23 campuses)

- Priority registration for classes (all 23 campuses)

- New Student Veterans orientation (87% [20 campuses])

- Student Veterans Organization (all 23 campuses)

- Veterans social space/VRC (87% [20 campuses])

- Special admissions policies for veterans (all 23 campuses)

The campuses provide specialty services; however, the results from the interviews and data found that articulation officers still lack understanding of what credit can be awarded and how best to educate veterans on these services when they are on campus.

In conclusion, internal campus communications need improvement to inform all campus officials with a role including transfer advisors, veterans support staff, faculty, deans and chairs of departments, veterans, and any other public campus administrators who provide support in the process. Looking at the first lens of formal organization, the campuses need a transformation from an organization into an institution to overcome the looseness and organized anarchy of decisions around policy and administration (Selznick, 1994). The study found the campus needs to start with their own administrators in order to train them on policies and practices. Once campus administrators are clear on institutional policies and practices, they are able to better inform stakeholders on military transfer credit.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the variables that emerged from the in-depth interviews and research. I began my analysis of interviews to find out different methods for policy and administration of military transfer credits on college campuses and learn about the process of institutionalization of the organization over time (Selznick, 1957). In the next chapter, I discuss

conclusions from the case studies and their contribution to public policy and administration and

higher education institutions.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

Discussion and Conclusions

Through this research, I explored the relationship between higher education institutions and military transfer credit. Connecting this study to the military transfer credit policy process in the state of California provides a clearer understanding of what practices are working and where public administrators need to continue to work toward stronger public practices. Specifically, I argue that administrators, staff, and faculty need to partner with veterans to provide more credit toward their degrees. Campuses need leaders who are willing to understand institutional policies and practices and make adaptations to better serve the student veteran population. This problem matters because the "Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) has found that a student with prior learning credits is two and a half times more likely to graduate than a student who does not have prior learning credits (Legislatures, 2014)." This dissertation suggests that there is still a significant grey area in military transfer credit and there is a need for more exploration of policy formulation and implementation.

This dissertation attempts to address the gap in institutional knowledge in higher education on veterans and public policy and administration of military transfer. By documenting the history and development of policy practices of two college campuses within the largest California public institutional system, I contribute to understanding of why military transfer credit serve veterans and institutional norms, policies, and procedures towards degree attainment. Veterans in higher education is an area of the literature that needs more research. The findings show that the college campuses were changing their "policies to model themselves after similar organizations that they perceived to be more legitimate or successful, a finding consistent with Selznick's observations (Selznick, 1996)." In discussions with higher education campus

administrators and public policy professionals, I found that leaders on campus are creating policy changes and there is still much work needed to move forward across both the campus and state-wide system to make institutional policies to award credit. Specifically, I found that institutional policy was constantly evolving to fit the needs of the student veterans. Additionally, there was a clear need for better communication between the Chancellor's Office and individual campuses to create policies and institutional practices to strengthen clear guidelines for both public administrators awarding the military transfer credit and veteran students have the right to clearly know how credits transfer.

Summary of Research

I began this research with a review of Selznick's institutional theory examining four lenses as a toolbox to look at policy and administration. I reviewed the GI Bill, it's history, development of the relationship between institutions and veterans, continued struggles with public policy and administration of military transfer credit and the role of campus administrators in institutional policy. The cases of Campus A and Campus B were models of administration and the complexities of institutionalization to create policies and practices for military transfer credit. The four lenses provide a way to understand organization vs. institution. Selznick's informal organization theory shows in Case A and Case B, a situation where administration holds the system of military transfer credit together. The information reveals an attempt by campus administrators recognizing current policies and practices need to be evaluated. The informal organization makes rational choices on policies, but needed additional resources from campuses, administrators, and leadership to provide evaluations of best practices moving forward. Administrators at the two campuses were an informal system making rational choices on decisions with limited information on how best to carry out administration for transfer credit.

These individuals were really holding the system together for transfer credit. As this dissertation showed, by using Selznick's lens what appeared to be a thin institutionalization was found with the policies and practices. A clear set of defined missions, norms, and values around military transfer credit needed to be established by leadership. The informal organization at both campuses needed more support within campus administration, faculty, support staff, registration to name just a few in order to energize the system to create policies that better supported a clearly defined institutional mission.

The aim found in the interviews was to understand more about the Chancellor's Office, Campus A and B's very broad aims for transfer credit policies. The vagueness of the organization-wide goals to "support and serve veterans" required more precision and effective administration to clarify transfer credit policy. This included providing sponsored retreats for leaders on campuses to learn in formal settings that included presentations, working groups, campus-wide conference calls on veteran policies, and one on one discussion on policies with Chancellor's Office leadership. Even though the findings highlighted steps that were being made to create a new investment in military transfer credit policy between the institutional leadership and campuses there is still work that needs to be done. This highlighted a large gap in the institution. It is clear the organizations have similar goals and rules. The cases are an example of being barley institutionalized since they need to create a formal structure of organization for policy and administration of military transfer credit. There is a partnership between the Chancellor's Office and Campus B administration to create resources for policymaking, such as, hosting discussions, workshops, conferences, and other areas of communication between campuses. Selznick's formal structure of "goals and rules; a chain of command; channels of communication" may help overcome the looseness, instability, and limited rationality of the ad

hoc or contractual agreements that has been created as an informal organization of administration (Selznick, 1994). My aim was to have a better understanding of how administrators made decisions on military transfer credit.

Findings

This research began with the recognition that institutionalization theory may be able to provide a lens to better see formal and informal organization (Selznick, 1948). There is a gap in the higher education literature on veteran transfer credit. Institutionalization theory provided a lens to begin to understand the informal organization that is formed as a way of making sense of policy and administration in higher education institutions. From the standpoint of organization as a formal system, persons are viewed functionally, in respect to their roles, as participants in assigned segments of the co- operative system (Selznick, 1948). There are two ways this study contributes to a better understanding of higher education administration: 1) clearly defined goals and rules, a chain of command, and 2) problems of organizational role arises in institutions of higher education that serve specific communities like veterans.

The first contribution is based on the need to create a formal organization in higher education administration of military transfer credit policies. As the cases found, mission is vague and unclear, which created a thin organization. The creation of informal organizations attempted to address and operationalize administration of credits. Ambiguity of roles, communication, and policies demands the institution make a first step to institutionalize. As I discussed in Chapter 6, campus administrators at Campus A lacked resources and policies for interpreting campus coursework from military transfer credits. Administrators were unaware that current normative operations on campus were putting veterans in false academic standing and creating burdens for their GI Bill funding. This thin institutionalization impacted outcome for

veteran success towards graduation. This contributes to the higher education literature because it shows a need to investigate informal organizations that are making decisions and carrying out policies that are practices that impact the organization. Comparing two similar institutions of higher education found resources that were used by other campus administrators that could give guidance for future policy practices.

Second, we can see that institutions are complex. Institutions of higher education often define veterans in a separate category of students. Language that was used in the interviews and on the websites of the Chancellor's Office and Campus A and Campus prove this is true as "serving veterans," "veteran support center," or "veteran resource center." The separation of both veteran students and military transfer credit places veterans in a community of their own. This separation places a responsibility on the institution and administrators to have a specific role and policy agenda to meet these needs. Selznick points out, "an institutional role cannot be won merely by wishing for it or by verbalizing it clearly. It must be founded in the realistic ability of the organization to do the job (Selznick, 1984)." Campus A, for example, showed there was a communication problem for assigning tasks, roles, and responsibilities to carry out new policies and practices to better serve veteran military transfer credit. This suggests that policies will continue to adapt, and change based on both institution and student veteran needs. Leadership at institutions need to continually anticipate needs and changes for training, education, and preparing staff, faculty, and administrators involved in transferring credits to better serve this community. Additionally, campuses must work to inform student veterans of their student rights to transfer credit and adapt policies to fit individual needs for a clear understanding of what is required of them by the institution. Students must understand how the military transfer credit

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process works, so there is a clear understanding on part of the institution and veteran. The nature of the institution must be clearly defined in order to meet the needs of the students it serves.

Leadership at institutions of higher education can learn from this dissertation in three areas: 1) resources, 2) mission, and 3) administrative roles. It is the duty of leadership to set clear definitions for veterans on campus. Within the research the terminology of resources for veterans was varied on campus. Campuses need a clear understanding of what resources are needed for "veteran friendly services" on campuses. Leadership can learn from this system by understanding the internal and external communities that support their campus and provide resources. By understanding what additional resources are needed on campus to support a mission for "serving veterans" can be more clearly defined. Leadership needs to first define institutionalized values around veterans on their campuses. Lastly, once mission is defined, the biggest lesson learned is providing administrators with duties, roles, and expectations to support military transfer credit. These three areas will help support the growth of an organization into an institution that provides more resources, a mission, and administrative roles for military transfer credit.

Implications of Research

There are two ways that this research has contributed to the current institutional literature. The first of these is to revisit a common theme for institutionalism theorists relating to the question of missions, norms, culture, and implementation. As I discussed previously, veteran military transfer credit has been a low policy priority for institutions of higher education. Public funding for state institutions of higher education and veterans investing GI Bill funds has been criticized and investigated in the U.S. Congress. This dissertation does not address the normative questions around public funding of education, but instead applies public administration theories

that shed light on policy and administration. I do not claim that public administrators are influenced only by missions, norms, and culture, but instead there are broader implications for future research. This research suggests administrators, specifically related to communities, may influence and impact decisions, culture, and normative foundations of the policymaking process at institutions.

The second point for research and scholarship is to expand the idea of the role of leadership in administration. Leaders are indeed making decisions on policy but using normative framing to understand how this impact both the institution and the participants of the institution (veterans in this case). Selznick (1996) points out that institutional leadership should be distinguished from management. Sharing resources on institutional policies and practices was influential for each individual campus public administrator to learn about what was working within the higher educational system.

Limitations

This research has presented an approach to studying the idea of institutionalism as lens for learning more about higher education institutions and policy and administration of military transfer credit. This study may provide a new area for research in institutions of higher education and veterans affairs, but it is not without its limitations. The first limitation that it is delimited to one state, California. California serves as one of the largest veterans serving populations for the higher education community, but does not capture the transfer process throughout the nation. Increasing the number of states or cases would have meant a longer process for interview data to be completed. It also would change the demographic of the two institutions of higher education studied for research. Both campuses in this study were similar organizations and allowed study of normative orders in order to complete analysis.

Similarly, the subjects were public institutions of higher education and were all recipients of state and federal funding. The study was limited to looking at only public institutions and did not take into study private or for-profit institutions of higher education. Looking at institutions other than public college campuses and universities would change the relationship of the role of public administrators when looking at institutionalism.

The other limitations presented in this study was the number of interviews conducted, which restricted the sample size. Larger samples would make it easier to see if there were variations in leadership and policymaking or if there were fewer significant changes. The limitation was due to public administrators on campuses. Chapter 4 is an explanation of many of the problems I faced with attempting to conduct interviews on public campuses. My attempts to conduct research even on my own graduate school campus went unanswered by the public university administrators charged with implementing the veteran's benefits. What this research demonstrates is a gap in awareness of who handles policies on campus. These are coupled with lengthy response timeframes, which led to either nonexistent or too lengthy to conduct timely research. Usually, articulation of military transfer credit was completed by one individual on campus identified by entering transfer units. Public administrators involved in the process of veteran support and decisions on changing policy were limited to a few staff and faculty members.

Future Research

Future research would bring scholarship to some of those limitations by expanding the application of this study to other contexts of public institutions of higher education. I found public administrators eager to learn about other policy practices on campuses in order to determine if similar results are found. The idea of looking at the role of leaders in adaptive

changing institutions may apply to additional campuses in the public state higher education system, but also private and for-profits campuses that serve veteran students. It would be helpful to see what positive changes are happening from leaders creating new military transfer credit policy. These practices may be applied to adapt and address problems such as creating clear policy and training for administrators on campus and veterans to have clear guidance on how credit is awarded when they transfer.

Conclusion

ACE reported in a document in 2012, "From Soldier to Student II: Assessing Campus Programs for Veterans and Service Members,

> *"there has been a rise in institutions of higher education providing a dedicated public administrator on campus to serve their veteran student community from 49% to 71%. Additionally, since 2009, the number of institutions with programs serving veterans has increased from 57% to 62% (American Council on Education).* "

As the study found, higher education institutional leadership are increasing support staff and making changes to review policies regarding student veterans military transfer credit. Despite these changes, military transfer credit is not the only area that contributes to veteran success on campus. Institutions of higher education need to increase resources for student veterans on college campuses.

The research showed that even with a dedicated campus official, there need to be transparent policies for administration of credit and expectations for student veteran applying for military transfer credit on campus. Organizations need leaders to define mission, norms, and values for their campus administrators. Clarity is needed on policies and expectations for veteran services. There is still much research needed on policies of priority registration, transfer policies, state

residency policies, and student health services, including mental and physical health services, which are relevant to future veteran success.

This research explores the role of military transfer credit at institutions of higher education. An institutional policy is important for both the institution and student in order to understand how credit is articulated, evaluated, and posted for prior learning. Additionally, it is clear campus policies should be continually evaluated and reviewed by campus leaders to meet both institutional and students needs as they change and adapt. This issue moves into additional higher education veteran services policy that is outside of the study's scope—namely counseling and psychological services, mental health disability, physical disability, and other social supports. This research gives public administrators and state and federal agents an understanding of the role of the institution in providing campus based veteran services.

Appendix A. Chronology of Educational Assistance Programs Administered by the VA

Year Enacted	Common Name	Establishing Legislation	U.S. Code	Currently Paying Benefits
1944	Original GI Bill	Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944	Title 38, Chapter 12	No
1952	Korean Conflict GI Bill	Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1952	Title 38, Chapter 33 (repealed in 1966)	No
1956	DEA (Survivors' and Dependents Educational Assistance)	War Orphans' Educational Assistance Act of 1956	Title 38, Chapter 35	No
1966	Post-Korean Conflict and Vietnam Era GI Bill	Veterans Readjustment Benefits Act of 1966	Title 38, Chapter 34	No
1974	Veterans and Dependents Education Loan Program	Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974	Title 38, Chapter 36 (repealed in 1981)	No
1976	VEAP (Post-Vietnam Era Veterans Educational Assistance)	Veterans' Education and Employment Assistance Act of 1976	Title 38, Chapter 32	Yes
1981	Educational Assistance Test Program (Sec. 901)	Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1981	Title 10, Chapter 106A	Yes
1981	Educational Assistance Pilot Program (Sec. 903)	Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1981	Title 10 U.S.C. §2141	No
1983	Veterans' Job Training Act	Emergency Veterans' Job Training Act of 1983	Title 29 U.S.C. §1721 (repealed in 2000)	No
1985	MGIB-AD (Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty)	Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1985	Title 38, Chapter 30 Yes	Yes

1985	MGIB-SR (Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve)	Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1985	Title 10, Chapter 1606	Yes
1990	Refunds for Certain Service Academy Graduate	Department of Veterans Affairs Nurse Pay Act of 1990	Section 207 Title 38 U.S.C. §1622	No
1992	Service Members Occupational Conversion and Training Act of 1992 (SMOCTA)	National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993	Title 10 U.S.C. §1143	No
2005	REAP (Reserves Educational Assistance Program)	Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for FY2005	Title 10, Chapter 1607	Yes
2008	Post-9/11 GI Bill	Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008	Title 38, Chapter 33	Yes
2009	Marine Gunnery Sergeant John David Fry Scholarship	Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2009	(P.L. 111-32) Title 38, Chapter 33	Yes

Source: (Cassandra Dortch, 2012)

Appendix B. Script and Questionnaire for Interviews

Dear participant:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview on (date/time) to examine military articulation decisions at public institutions of higher education. Your participation in this session is voluntary and it will last approximately 30-60 minutes. You may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time.

Participation involves being interviewed by a researcher from The Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Notes will be written and the interview will be taped using an audio MP3 device with your consent, but only the principal researcher will have access to this information. The research team will have access to summaries of this information.

This research complies with the research protocol by the Institutional Review Board at Virginia Tech.

At the beginning of the interview, we will ask you to confirm that you have read and understand the explanation provided about this study. By agreeing to the interview, you will be given a separate consent form to sign and return prior to participate. The research team is willing to answer any questions, and we will appreciate if you could confirm that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Below is a summary of the questions that we will cover during the interview. Again, thank you!

1) What are your institutions policies and practices for articulation of military transfer credit?
   a. Where can current and prospective students learn about institutional resources for transferring military credit?
2) How often are military transfer credits approved at your institution?
   a. In your experience, what are the most important factors influencing the approval of military transfer credits?
   b. What campus-level strategies might help develop policies and processes that are supportive for the articulation of military transfer credit?
   c. What strategies are being used to engage faculty and staff in the discussion of military transfer credit?
3) At your institution, how are articulation officers hired or selected for their role(s)?
   a. Does the institution have multiple individuals approving or administering credit?
   b. If there are multiple individuals, please explain any policies in place for how credit is administered when multiple individuals are involved in decision making?
4) What policies are in place for training employees on administering military transfer credit?
   a. Is there an oversight process to check or evaluate awarded articulation credit?
   b. What policies are in place for any errors that occur during the process?

5) What policies are in place for informing student veterans on awarded transfer credits?
   a. Are there ways student veterans can provide feedback on decisions?
   b. Are student veterans able to petition the institution for errors or mistakes in the process?
   c. Is there anything else you think would be helpful for me to know about military transfer credit at your campus? May I contact you again if I have additional questions?

Again, thank you so much for your participation in this interview.

Respectfully,

Kathryn J. Buechel

Appendix C. Consent Form

<div align="center">

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
Informed Consent for Participants
in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

</div>

Title of Project: Public Institutions and Military Transfer Credit

Investigator(s):   **Kathryn Buechel**   kbuechel@vt.edu/ 714-261-0757

_____   _____

Name   E-mail / Phone number

I. Purpose of this Research Project

The purpose of the study is to gather data to learn about the approval process on public college campuses that award transfer credit for military students. There is no publically available data on how public campuses make individual decisions to award military veteran credit. I will conduct interviews with adults working as public administrators at state colleges and universities that make decisions to award acadmic credit for militiary education. I will look at how decisions differ or have similarities from the public university goals and expectations.

Results may be used for a published dissertation. All subjects being interviewed are competent, adults, employed in public universities. No child, pregnant, or prisoners will be included. No people will be interviewed that I previously worked with in a job.

II. Procedures

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in a 60-minute recorded interview.

III. Risks

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

IV. Benefits

No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

The data will be collected during the interview. At no time will the researchers release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your consent.

The Virginia Tech (VT) Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view the study's data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research.

VI. Compensation

There is no compensation for this research.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

It is important for you to know that you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. You are free not to answer any questions that you choose or respond to what is being asked of you without penalty.

Please note that there may be circumstances under which the investigator may determine that a subject should not continue as a subject.

VIII. Questions or Concerns

Should you have any questions about this study, you may contact the research investigator whose contact information is included at the beginning of this document.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, or need to report a research-related injury or event, you may contact the VT IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore at moored@vt.edu or (540) 231-4991.

IX. Subject's Consent

I have read the Consent Form and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. By accepting to interview, I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary signed consent. My signature below provides consent of the interview. I will have the opportunity to review the content of the interview by request to the researcher.

Interviewer Signature--
First Name, Last Name --
Email Contact Information and/or Telephone Contact--

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Appendix D. Consent Form

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
Informed Consent for Participants
in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title of Project: Public Institutions and Military Transfer Credit

Investigator(s):   **Kathryn Buechel**   kbuechel@vt.edu/ 714-261-0757
_____   _____
Name   E-mail / Phone number

I. Purpose of this Research Project

The purpose of the study is to gather data to learn about the approval process on public college campuses that award transfer credit for military students. There is no publically available data on how public campuses make individual decisions to award military veteran credit. I will conduct interviews with adults working as public administrators at state colleges and universities that make decisions to award acadmic credit for militiary education. I will look at how decisions differ or have similarities from the public university goals and expectations.

Results may be used for a published dissertation. All subjects being interviewed are competent, adults, employed in public universities. No child, pregnant, or prisoners will be included. No people will be interviewed that I previously worked with in a job.

II. Procedures

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in a 60-minute recorded interview.

III. Risks

There are no known risks to participating in this study.

IV. Benefits

No promise or guarantee of benefits has been made to encourage you to participate.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

The data will be collected during the interview. At no time will the researchers release identifiable results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without your consent.

The Virginia Tech (VT) Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view the study's data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research.

VI. Compensation

There is no compensation for this research.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

It is important for you to know that you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. You are free not to answer any questions that you choose or respond to what is being asked of you without penalty.

Please note that there may be circumstances under which the investigator may determine that a subject should not continue as a subject.

VIII. Questions or Concerns

Should you have any questions about this study, you may contact the research investigator whose contact information is included at the beginning of this document.

Should you have any questions or concerns about the study's conduct or your rights as a research subject, or need to report a research-related injury or event, you may contact the VT IRB Chair, Dr. David M. Moore at moored@vt.edu or (540) 231-4991. ██████████
██
mayah@cpp.edu

IX. Subject's Consent

I have read the Consent Form and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. **By accepting to interview, I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary signed consent to conduct an audio recorded interviewed. I acknowledge that the recording will only be used only by the researcher to transcribe notes and will be safeguarded with a password protected computer. My signature below provides consent of the interview. I will have the opportunity to review the content of the interview by request to the researcher.**

Signature of Subject --
First Name, Last Name ---
Email Contact Information and/or Telephone Contact---

Appendix E. Research Protocol Approval

VirginiaTech

MEMORANDUM

DATE:	October 13, 2017
TO:	Matthew Martin Dull, Kathryn Jean Buechel
FROM:	Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires January 29, 2021)
PROTOCOL TITLE:	Buechel Dissertation: Military Credits
IRB NUMBER:	17-890

Effective October 13, 2017, the Virginia Tech Institution Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the New Application request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As:	Expedited, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 5,6,7
Protocol Approval Date:	October 13, 2017
Protocol Expiration Date:	October 12, 2018
Continuing Review Due Date*:	September 28, 2018

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

Invent the Future

Appendix F. Interview Questions

1) What are your institution's policies and practices for articulation of military transfer credit?

   a. Where can current and prospective students learn about institutional resources for transferring military credit?

2) How often are military transfer credits approved at your institution?

   a. In your experience, what are the most important factors influencing the approval of military transfer credits?

   b. What campus-level strategies might help develop policies and processes that are supportive for the articulation of military transfer credit?

   c. What strategies are used to engage faculty and staff in the discussion of military transfer credit?

3) At your institution, how are articulation officers hired or selected for their role(s)?

   a. Does the institution have multiple individuals approving or administering credit?

   b. If there are multiple individuals, please explain any policies in place for how credit is administered when multiple individuals are involved in decision-making?

4) What policies are in place for training employees on administering military transfer credit?

   a. Is there an oversight process to check or evaluate awarded articulation credit?

   b. What policies are in place for any errors that occur during the process?

5) What policies are in place for informing student veterans on awarded transfer credits?

   a. Are there ways student veterans can provide feedback on decisions?

b. Are student veterans able to petition the institution for errors or mistakes in the process?

c. Is there anything else you think would be helpful for me to know about military transfer credit at your campus? May I contact you again if I have additional questions?

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