

## By The Numbers

### Student Veterans Nationwide

- In 2018, 669,000+ SV used education benefits <sup>(1)</sup>
- 4-in-5 attend 4-year public and private institutions <sup>(2)</sup>
- Cumulative SV GPA is 3.5 on a 4.0 scale (higher than the national average) <sup>(2)</sup>
- Approx. 2-in-3 SV have a disability rating <sup>(2)</sup>
- Most common age of SV is between 25-39 <sup>(2)</sup>
- Approx. 53 % SV pursuing a 4-year degree <sup>(2)</sup>
- Approx. 29 % SV pursuing graduate education <sup>(2)</sup>
- Approx. 60% are first-generation students <sup>(2)</sup>
- Most common degrees pursued by SV include business, STEM, & healthcare <sup>(2)</sup>
- Over half SV rate a 3-of-5 or worse level of impact from their disability on school, family, finances, time management, social life and employment <sup>(2)</sup>
- Over half SV rate a 3-of-5 or worse level of stress from their disability on school, family, finances, time management, social life and employment <sup>(2)</sup>
- Up to 33% of SV have diagnoses of PTSD/TBI <sup>(3)</sup>
- Only 20% of SV are likely to be traditionally college aged; 52% of SV are likely to be married; 53% of SV are likely to have children; 19% of SV are single parents <sup>(4)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup> United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 2020.

<sup>(2)</sup> Student Veterans of America, 2020

<sup>(3)</sup> Student Veterans of America, 2021.

<sup>(4)</sup> Borsari et al., 2017

## Resources

### On - Campus

#### Center for Military Support

**Location:** AUC Rm 183

**Services:** Academic and Transition Counseling, Lounge, Study Space

**POC:** [militarysupport@plu.edu](mailto:militarysupport@plu.edu)

#### Student Financial Services

**Location:** Hauge Rm 102

**Services:** VA Financial Aid Counseling

**POC:** [sfs@plu.edu](mailto:sfs@plu.edu)

#### PLU Counseling Center

**Location:** AUC Rm 300

**Services:** Counseling

**POC:** [chws@plu.edu](mailto:chws@plu.edu)

### Off - Campus

#### Tacoma Veterans Center

**Location:** 4916 Center St, E., Tacoma

**Services:** Confidential help, resources

**POC:** 253-565-7038

#### American Lake VA Hospital

**Location:** 9600 Veterans Dr SW, Tacoma

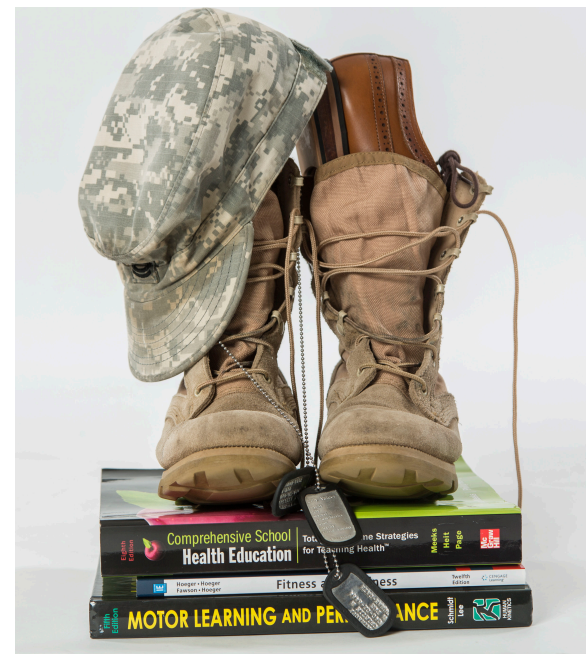
**Services:** Health Care, Mental Health Care

**Mental Health:** 253-583-1759

#### Veterans Crisis Line



## Student Veteran Support



## Best Practices and Information

Center for Military Support

# Anecdotal Evidence

## Statements from PLU Students

"I feel like I barely belong in polite society let alone a private university. However, I am here to engage with class content even while other students demonstrate apathy. **I only hope I'm not seen as crazy** or intense while I attempt to both apply myself fully and manage anxiety simultaneously." (Male, US Army)

"It is **difficult and stressful for me to engage** in group work with 18-22 year old **students who may not have the same level of maturity or dedication** that I do. I struggle to relate to young students that come across as entitled to an education that I gave up five years of my life to access as a first generation college student." (Female, US Army)

"My PTSD makes it hard for me to focus my thoughts, which makes hitting deadlines difficult sometimes. I fear that it makes me seem lazy, when **I'm actually lost on a hamster wheel of ideas and overwhelmed**." (Male, US Navy)

"I have a life and responsibilities outside of the classroom, that perhaps my younger classmates do not, so I would just advocate, that **a little understanding of my pathway in life goes a long way**. I've had a career before, and when I could no longer do that, I chose to pursue something that required a degree." (Male, US Army)

"**Having PTSD often leaves me feeling isolated** from my fellow nursing students. My mannerisms and behavior come off as brash and indifferent. The way I tend to express myself is just different." (Male, US Army)

"I had to take time off for **mandatory training** and even with my accommodations, **I was not granted the necessary extensions to succeed in my classes. It caused me to waste benefits and ruin my GPA**. I don't get a choice when I serve, I would appreciate more support or some gratitude for my service. I don't expect classwork to be easier, I expect the same difficulty, but I expect some understanding." (Male, US Army)

# Review of Literature

## Common Barriers

- Developing a Role in Academia (5)
- Assimilating to a Non-Structured Lifestyle (5)
- Establishing & Maintaining Relationships (5)
- Developing a Non-Military Identity (5)

## Cultural Differences

- Collectivism (5, 6)
- Hierarchical Structure (5, 6)
- Masculinity (5, 6)
- Aversion to Mental Healthcare (5, 6)

## Combat Stress & Learning

- Sleeplessness and Lack of Concentration (6)
- Alcohol Use (6)
- Flashbacks (6)

## Common Accommodations

- Short Breaks in Class
- Attendance Flexibility
- Extra Time on Assignments and Projects
- Quiet Space for Testing

(5) Arminio et al., 2015; Borsari et al., 2017; Libin et al., 2019; Ness et al., 2014; Norman et al., 2015  
(6) American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, 2014

# Best Practices

## How Can You Help?

- **Identify yourself** as a veteran or military affiliated faculty or staff member
- Understand the common cultural differences between military and civilian life
- Ask your SV to schedule office hours with you at the beginning of the semester; **ask** if they want to be identified as a veteran in the classroom
- Suggest SV utilize the Center for Military Support on campus
- Engage in active learning strategies that force integration amongst students
- Many SV are afraid to ask for help or do not think they need it. **You can offer and suggest the resources**
- Recognize the **value** of **all veterans** in the classroom (many female veterans feel discounted)
- Include PTSD or Military Support on your syllabus resources



Resources for Faculty & Staff from [VA.gov](https://www.va.gov)

Borsari, B., et al. (2017). Student Service members/veterans on campus: Challenges for reintegration



Elliott, M. (2014). Predicting problems on campus: An analysis of college student veterans