



## Legislative Report for SB 275 (2011)

### Community College Credit for Education and Training Obtained in the Armed Forces

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February 1, 2012

#### Legislation

In 2011, the Oregon Legislature enacted Senate Bill 275 which required the local community college boards, in consultation with the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs, to develop standards for the community colleges to give credit for education and training obtained by a person while the person served in the Armed Forces of the United States, and methods for informing person of the opportunity to receive credit.

#### Status of the Work

Oregon community colleges are familiar locally with the deployments Oregon has experienced and are committed to helping the large numbers of Oregon soldiers pursue postsecondary education during their time away from home and upon their return. Coupled with the complications of multiple deployments, student's patterns of pursuing their education have grown in complexity and the colleges are adjusting their practices as a result.

The American Council on Education (ACE) guidelines are the national standard used to award credit for education and training obtained by a person while the person served in the Armed Forces of the United States. Each institution is responsible for determining its own policies and practices with regard to the transfer, acceptance, and award of credit.

ACE is providing training in February 2012 to Oregon community college and university registrars and admissions officers, as well as, representatives from the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs and Veterans' Service Officers to help ensure that the ACE standard is applied consistently across the state. This training will focus on the evaluation of military courses and occupational specialties. In awarding ACE credit to veterans', the evaluatory process helps ensure that students receive the entire course of training intended and that their preparation meets the employer's expectations.

Once the evaluation of an individual veteran's military education and training transcript is complete and the credit is cross-walked to the college's civilian curriculum, it can be replicated and re-used at the same college for the same course. As staff do this, they become more familiar and more experienced with the process and the nuances. There is a an upfront cost, but it diminishes over time as staff become more familiar and more comfortable with how to do this, and faculty become more accepting of the rigor and validity of training moved from one learning environment to another, whether that be a community college, university, or military training school.

Veteran students have been informed of this opportunity by websites, academic advisors, registrars, admissions officers, and Campus Veterans Service Officers (CVSO), although the

CVSO program ended this past June when it was not funded by the Legislature and the seven shared Campus VSO positions were eliminated.

This bill is about helping Oregon's veterans transfer their military acquired knowledge and skills to civilian life and careers. There is a shared concern to work with veterans to help them jump start civilian education and training. Oregon's community colleges stand ready to continue to help veterans pursue post-secondary education as they return from active duty around the world.

## **Contact Information**

Krissa Caldwell, Deputy Commissioner  
Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development  
255 Capitol Street NE, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Salem, Oregon 97310-1300  
503-947-2414  
[krissa.caldwell@state.or.us](mailto:krissa.caldwell@state.or.us)