University Studies for Student Veterans

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This course helps veterans transition smoothly from military service to college, and helps them maximize their success once they arrive.

About this course

The skills you learned in the military will go a long way toward helping you succeed in college, but if you’re looking for some extra support – or an academic tune-up – then you’ll find it in this course. We know that the culture of higher education is different from the culture of the military in meaningful ways, and we also know that one of the keys to excelling in college - especially for student veterans - is learning to navigate these differences successfully, right from the very start.
How It Started

What We Were Doing

- University Studies
- Mandatory, non-credit transition curriculum for breakaway learners (nontraditional students)
- Students responded positively
- Student veterans responded *especially positively*
What We Were Doing

- Maybe some of what we’re teaching could be useful to other students and institutions.
- Maybe some of this material could be tailored to help support student veterans specifically.
Objectives

To create a suite of learning objects designed around best practices that promote successful transition and academic success for student veterans.

To engage a network of professionals who support student veterans in transition.
A MOOC with four main instructional modalities

What We Built

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Credential-Bearing Online Course

A stand-alone, completely free online course based on a proven Columbia University transition curriculum allows students to earn an edX certificate.
Virtual Library of Learning Objects

What We Built

Fully modular curriculum design released under Creative Commons encourages innovative use of materials for different contexts, goals, and populations.
Companion Text for Transition Courses

Six curricular modules and multiple formative assessment types complement and enhance existing on-the-ground transition programs.
Tool for Flipped Classroom Pedagogy

Online content delivery makes it easy to flip learning engagements and explore concepts through facilitated discussion.
What We Built

Curriculum Overview

- Instructional content
- Veteran testimonials
- Reflection/discussion exercises
- Curated content
- Formative and summative assessments
- Instructor feedback
New Learning Pathways and Modes of Engagement

Video: Veteran Voices - Putting in the Work

[Video]

you're not the gold medalist.
you were at the Olympics
and so you feel good about that.
But then you come up against something.
For me specifically it was French.
I don't hear very well
and my education was a little squirrely growing up.
so I didn't end up having to take language in school.

So I never had to learn a language before.
I didn't know a lot of grammatical terms.
It was just this flood of information
that I couldn't hear well
and it's a requirement for getting my degree
and I just didn't have the option not to do it.
There wasn't a way for me to choose to take something easier
or whatever.
try though I may have.
I just had to grind it out.
Student-Centered Learning Pathways

Collaborating with student veterans to co-design curricular “action plans” that focus on specific topics ranging from skill-building to self-care.

Created by Jesper Vestergaard from Noun Project
“Academic Skills Starter Kit” Pathway

“For student veterans experiencing academic distress, feeling overwhelmed, and unsure of what to do next.”

1.6.1: Metacognition in Practice
2.2.1: How to Activate Your Reading
2.3.1: Effective Text Marking
2.4.1: What Kind of Note-Taker Are You?
2.5.1: Cornell Note Taking Method
3.5.1: The Distributed Study Model
4.7, 4.8.1, 4.9.1, 4.10.1: Misc. Writing Videos

Total video time: 1:09:34
Cohorts for Professional Learning

Working with veteran transition professionals to share best practices and design interventions that leverage MOOC materials to help address local challenges. (Facilitator Engagement)
Hub for Community Generated Resources

Connecting the community around solving transition challenges with flexible learning designs. (Engagement Plans)
What Others Are Doing

Innovative Use By Other Institutions

A community college is currently using this curriculum as a companion text for an existing on-the-ground “Boots to Books” course. Flipped classroom.
Innovative Use
By Other Institutions

Another is preparing to use the curriculum to train their front-line student veteran staff in their Veteran Resource Center. Professional development.
Innovative Use
By Other Institutions

A four-year school plans to use the tool to build out and deliver a “growth mindset” session for their veteran student orientation in the fall. New programming.
Innovative Use By Other Institutions

Another plans to use the tool to create a skills curriculum for student veterans who have been placed on academic probation. Academic support.
Oh... did I mention?

IT’S FREE!
I’m Here to Help!

If this tool sounds cool to you, but you’re not sure where to start, let’s find a time to talk.
How To Contact Me!

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