




MIKE KRAUSE
Executive Director

BILL HASLAM
Governor

STATE OF TENNESSEE
HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
PARKWAY TOWERS, SUITE 1900
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0830
(615) 741-3605

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TO: Boards of Locally Governed Institutions, Tennessee Board of Regents and University of Tennessee Systems Leaders

FROM: Mike Krause, Executive Director, Tennessee Higher Education Commission 

SUBJECT: Commission guidance regarding Public Chapter 31: evaluation of military experiences for academic credit

In March 2017, The Tennessee General Assembly passed into law Public Chapter 31, an update to the Veterans Education Transition Support ("VETS") Act. This legislation, now codified as Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-7-1310, affects the methods by which all public higher education institutions evaluate learning that occurs as part of military experience with the goal of maximizing academic credit awarded for this learning. The legislation necessitates the attention and action of all public higher education institutions in the State of Tennessee.

The legislation requires that state institutions develop and implement uniform procedures for awarding academic credit for military experience in the form of standardized course equivalencies. Institutions are required to submit these course equivalencies to THEC and submit progress reports as course equivalencies are developed and implemented. The legislation specifically directs the following of public higher education institutions:

- Institutions must develop course equivalencies that result in the award of academic credit for military experience consistent with the standards of the American Council on Education (TCA § 49-7-1310 2(d))
- When developing course equivalencies, institutions must: consider all aspects of military training, not just physical fitness or activity components; provide progress reports to THEC upon request; and submit course equivalencies to THEC using prescribed procedures by December 15, 2018 (TCA § 49-7-1310 2(d))

The legislation directs THEC to concurrently develop a website to inform potential students with military experience of the academic credit available to them. From the course equivalencies submitted by institutions, this website will contain a database sortable by military occupational specialties, describing the academic credit available, the credentials to which it applies, and the institutions offering the credit and credentials.

THEC is also required by legislation to identify the military occupational specialties and academic programs which institutions will evaluate to develop course equivalencies by November 1, 2017. These specialties and academic programs have the potential to promote veteran credential completion and employment, based on workforce needs and occupational demand, and THEC is submitting this information to the governing boards for your review.

In accordance with this requirement, THEC has attached both a list of these military occupation specialties and a list of academic programs to this memo. THEC selected these military occupational specialties by the number of service members in the armed forces with these specialties, with attention to those serving at Fort Campbell. We also selected academic programs based on the most recent listing of programs of study with largest projected deficit in workforce preparation, as identified by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

This memo and the guidance that THEC is preparing should be shared with the individuals at your institutions who are responsible for serving student veterans and evaluating credit for prior learning. The provided tables show highest populated military occupations and in demand academic programs related to the needs of Tennessee's workforce will enable institutions in evaluating the military occupations that will have the most impact on student veterans. Institutions will use this information to prioritize and choose the military occupations that they will initially evaluate for course equivalency.

Additionally, to aid institutions in evaluating these military occupation specialties and creating course equivalencies, THEC will be providing each of your institutions a comprehensive guide. This guide will provide examples of the most important resources that institutions will use to evaluate military experience, explain each step in evaluating military service and creating course equivalencies, and include direction on how to form and guide an institutional team in evaluating military experience. The guide will also include specifications of the exact format that institutions will use to submit equivalencies to THEC.

Thank you for your work to ensure that our Tennessee veterans are appropriately awarded academic credit and benefit from the high-quality education that your institution offers.

Attachments

Military Occupational Specialties and Academic Programs

Military Occupational Specialties and Academic Programs

Using Data to Choose Military Occupational Specialties for Evaluation

Per Public Chapter 31, Tennessee public institutions will select military occupation specialties to evaluate for academic credit, which will be presented to veterans and military service people prior to their enrollment at the institution.

The following tables present military occupation specialties and academic programs selected by THEC which will have the greatest degree of impact on veterans and military service members both in terms of degree completion and employment in Tennessee. Institutions should use these tables and the information presented within them to select the military occupation specialties to evaluate for academic credit, and to understand which academic programs will have the greatest impact on Tennessee's workforce.

Military Occupation Specialties

Military Occupation Specialties are used to identify specific jobs within the U.S. Armed Forces. Because there are over 3,400 variations of these specialties, it is important to prioritize your institution's work by focusing on the occupation specialties most likely to affect veterans and service members in Tennessee. This includes understanding the most highly populated military occupational specialties in Tennessee and understanding how they relate to the academic programs and jobs that are needed for Tennessee's workforce.

Table 1 lists the most common or highly populated military occupation specialties possessed by individuals nationally, while **Table 2** lists the most highly populated occupation specialties possessed by individuals at Fort Campbell. Evaluating these occupation specialties for academic credit will impact a great number of Tennessee veterans and service members.

Your institution will use this information to choose the priority of military occupational specialties to evaluate. Once evaluated, THEC will then place these equivalencies in a centralized repository accessible by student veterans, which will also ensure that credit is awarded in a uniform statewide manner.

In future guidance that THEC will provide, we will describe the precise process and format by which these occupations should be articulated into course equivalencies.

Academic Programs

It is our belief that the academic programs that will have the most positive impact on veterans and service members are those that address Tennessee's workforce demand, and will most likely lead to sustainable employment.

Table 3 lists the academic programs aligned to jobs in demand in Tennessee. Ensuring that veterans have access to these programs sets them on a path to employment. Review the list of categories of academic programs. Consider which categories are the most relevant to your service area and to your institutions academic offerings. Use this table to begin preparing and identifying your institutional team of academic faculty within these areas who may be able to evaluate military experiences relevant to their academic discipline.

Tables 1 and 2: Common Occupational Specialties by Number of Service Members

Table 1 contains a national listing of the most common military occupational specialties within the Armed Forces service in 2010 (the most recent year for which data is publicly available). Table 2 contains the same listing, filtered to include only those serving at Fort Campbell, which is the closest major military installment to most Tennessee institutions.

How to Interpret these tables:

These tables depict the ranking of the top 25 military occupational specialties with the most service members. The first column is the rank of the specialties, from highest number of service members to lowest, ordered from 1-25.

Military Occupation Specialties are used to identify specific jobs within the U.S. Armed Forces. These specialties are designated by a unique identifier that corresponds to the occupation specialty. The second column Military Occupational Specialty (3 Digit Code) contains the unique identifier that comes in the form of a three digit code.

Military Occupation Specialties are also specific to a branch of service in the U.S. Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard). The third column, Branch, contains the branch of service which the military occupation specialty resides within.

The fourth column *Occupational Specialty* is the corresponding title of the 3-digit occupation code. For example, the military occupational specialty "Infantry" corresponds to the 3-digit code "11B" and is used by the Army. At Fort Campbell, there are 5,899 service members with this military occupational specialty.

Table 1: Common Occupational Specialties (All Active Duty Service members, 2010)

Rank	Military Occupational Specialty (3 digit code)	Branch	Occupational Specialty	Service Members
1	11B	Army	Infantry	55844
2	3P0X	Air Force	Security Forces	21990
3	68W	Army	Health Care Specialist	21113
4	91B	Army	Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic	17896
5	88M	Army	Motor Transport Operator	17756
6	31B	Army	Military Police	14693
7	2A6	Air Force	Aerospace Propulsion	13586
8	2A5	Air Force	Aircraft Maintenance	13490
9	92Y	Army	Unit Supply Specialist	12745
10	0311	Marine Corps	Rifleman	12413
11	3D1	Air Force	Cyberspace Support	11729
12	42A	Army	Human Resources Specialist	11505
13	92A	Army	Automated Logistical Specialist	11385
14	19D	Army	Cavalry Scout	11233
15	92F	Army	Petroleum Supply Specialist	10672
16	92G	Army	Food Service Specialist	10288
17	13B	Army	Cannon Crewmember	10267
18	HM	Navy	Hospital Corpsmen	9721
19	3D0	Air Force	Cyberspace Support	9476
20	12B	Army	Combat Engineer	9394
21	25U	Army	Signal Support Systems Specialist	9338
22	2A3	Air Force	Aerospace Maintenance	8988
23	MM	Navy	Machinist Mate	7542
24	74D	Army	Chemical Operations Specialist	7287
25	25B	Army	Information Systems Operator Analyst	7060

Table 2: Common Occupational Specialties (Fort Campbell, 2010)

Rank	Military Occupational Specialty (3 digit code)	Branch	Occupational Specialty	Service Members
1	11B	Army	Infantryman	5899
2	88M	Army	Motor Transport Operator	1940
3	91B	Army	Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic	1634
4	68W	Army	Health Care Specialist	1392
5	92A	Army	Automated Logistical Specialist	1115
6	92Y	Army	Unit Supply Specialist	1069
7	92F	Army	Petroleum Supply Specialist	1004
8	31B	Army	Military Police	932
9	92G	Army	Food Service Operations	886
10	13B	Army	Cannon Crewmember	857
11	15T	Army	UH-60 Helicopter Repairer	835
12	25U	Army	Signal Support Systems Specialist	814
13	42A	Army	Human Resources Specialist	801
14	13F	Army	Fire Support Specialist	657
15	19D	Army	Cavalry Scout	645
16	74D	Army	Chemical Operations Specialist	540
17	11C	Army	Indirect Fire Infantryman	535
18	12B	Army	Combat Engineer	527
19	15U	Army	CH-47 Helicopter Repairer	507
20	25B	Army	Information Technology Specialist	431
21	35F	Army	Intelligence Operations Specialist	428
22	15P	Army	Aviation Operations Specialist	372
23	15R	Army	AH-64 Attack Helicopter Repairer	325
24	13D	Army	Field Artillery Automated Tactical Data Systems Specialist	304
25	92W	Army	Water Treatment Specialist	274

Table 3: Programs of Study with Largest Projected Deficit in Workforce Preparation through 2024

This table presents the top 25 postsecondary programs of study for which employment opportunities are growing more rapidly than the supply of educated labor in Tennessee. These programs produce fewer graduates than the jobs available, so there is a need for additional Tennesseans to be trained in these areas. THEC publishes this table each year as part of the Academic Supply and Occupational Demand report. ¹

How to Interpret this Table:

The first column of this table contains a program of study cluster code. This is a distinct code assigned to a cluster of occupations that share similar skills and job functions. The second column is the corresponding name for this cluster. Each is used by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development to depict aggregate classifications of programs of study.

The table is sorted by the projected workforce deficit. This number is determined by subtracting projected annual openings from the number of completers for the most recent year available, 2015.

The final column displays the median salary for occupations within the program of study cluster.

For example, the program of study code 06.3120000 corresponds to the cluster for Banking and Finance. This program of study is projected to have 1,660 annual openings through the year 2024. With only 630 completers statewide in the year 2015, the annual workforce deficit is projected to be 1,030. Workers in this cluster earn a median salary of \$62,936.

¹ THEC (2017) Academic Supply and Occupational Demand in Tennessee. Table 7.
https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/thec/attachments/Academic_Supply_Occupational_Demand_-_Final_Version.pdf

Table 3: Programs of Study with Largest Projected Deficit in Workforce Preparation through 2024

Program of Study Code	Program of Study	Projected Annual Openings	Number of Completers, AY 2015	Projected Workforce Deficit	Median Salary
14.2000000	Selling and Sales Management	6,985	2	6,983	\$34,589
04.6000000	Administrative and Information Support	7,335	1,618	5,717	\$33,357
13.1000000	Precision Production Pathway	3,685	502	3,183	\$33,287
04.5000000	Communications Development	2,355	163	2,192	\$29,879
13.2200000	Production Operations & Maintenance	2,635	810	1,825	\$41,107
06.3120000	Banking and Finance Support Services	1,580	6	1,574	\$29,982
06.3110000	Banking and Finance	1,660	630	1,030	\$62,936
04.2120000	Accounting Administrative Support	1,715	792	923	\$33,772
02.2700000	All Other Construction	995	118	877	\$38,769
04.4000000	Business Analysis	860	86	774	\$64,644
05.1170000	Elementary Teachers, Except Special Education	1,010	392	618	\$47,983
04.3000000	Human Resources	600	66	534	\$48,897
09.2000000	Lodging Pathway	725	268	457	\$26,651
02.1220000	Technical Design & Preconstruction	410	99	311	\$64,531
05.1140000	Support Services- Adult and Continuing Education	265	2	263	\$29,538
05.2110000	Teacher Training Services- Pre-K- Early Childhood Education	475	224	251	\$33,995
11.3400000	Web/Multimedia Management, Programming	1,570	1,323	247	\$72,387
12.4140000	Fire Fighting	275	34	241	\$42,237
08.2190000	Medical Imaging- Radiography	255	46	209	\$50,698
15.1160000	Industrial Engineering	240	33	207	\$77,847
04.2110000	Accounting	1,460	1,329	131	\$58,766
01.3120000	Veterinary Technology	265	144	121	\$23,897
08.2220000	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	395	281	114	\$35,776
02.2100000	Construction Pathway - Construction Electrical	795	687	108	\$48,343
08.1170000	Physical Therapy	340	235	105	\$84,767

Source: Tennessee Department of Labor Workforce Development, Projections to 2024

¹ THEC (2017) Academic Supply and Occupational Demand in Tennessee. Table 7. https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/thec/attachments/Academic_Supply_Occupational_Demand_-_Final_Version.pdf