

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 153

(Senator Currie)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Appropriations

Higher Education - Academic Credit for Military Education, Training, and Experience

This bill requires the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), in consultation with the public institutions of higher education, to develop and adopt guidelines on awarding academic credit for a student's military training, course work, and education. In accordance with the guidelines developed by MHEC, the governing body of each public institution of higher education in the State must develop and implement policies governing the awarding of such credit.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MHEC, public four-year institutions, and Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) can develop the required guidelines and policies using existing resources. All public four-year institutions except the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP); the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC); and the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) already award credit for military training. To the extent higher education expenditures increase to evaluate military service for credit, it is assumed that it can be handled within existing higher education revenues. Higher education revenues may decrease due to academic credit being granted for military experience, which may reduce the number of credits for which tuition is paid; any decrease is expected to be minimal.

Local Effect: Local community college expenditures at the colleges without an existing policy to award academic credit for military credit (*i.e.*, Carroll Community College, Chesapeake College, and Wor-Wic College) may increase to develop and implement a policy to award academic credit for military training.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Public institutions of higher education are not required to develop and implement policies to grant academic credit for military training, course work, and education.

Background: According to the U.S. Department of Defense, 14 states have passed legislation regarding institutions awarding credit for military education, training, and experience. Six other states, including Maryland, are considering such legislation.

Immediately after World War II, the consensus in the educational community was that the practice of granting blanket credit to World War I veterans as a reward for length of service was educationally unsound. Educators concluded that military learning experiences applicable to civilian curricula should be assessed by faculty for potential credit. Therefore, in December 1945, at the request of civilian educational institutions and the regional accrediting associations, the American Council on Education (ACE) established a program to evaluate military educational programs and to assist institutions in granting credit for such experiences.

In 1975, ACE implemented a program for the evaluation of learning represented by demonstrated proficiency in Army enlisted military occupational specialties. Subsequently, the occupational assessment program of ACE was expanded to other uniformed services. The ACE guide is now entirely online.

Recognizing and using ACE's guide in evaluating and awarding academic credit for military training and experience is one of the four commitments that institutions must make to belong to the Service Members Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium. SOC was created in 1972 to provide educational opportunities for service members who, because they frequently moved from place to place, had trouble completing college degrees.

All public four-year institutions in Maryland except UMCP and UMBC, and all local community colleges except Carroll Community College, Chesapeake College, and Wor-Wic College belong to SOC. BCCC and a few of the State's independent and for-profit institutions also belong to SOC. It is unknown how these policies for awarding credit for military service have been implemented. Reportedly some community colleges are concerned that credit awarded for military training in accordance with the ACE guide will not transfer to four-year institutions.

In addition to ACE's recommendations for awarding credit to veterans and active-duty service personnel, there are other ways that an individual can earn college course credit prior to enrolling including Advanced Placement (AP) examinations, standard and higher-level International Baccalaureate (IB) examinations, and the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) examinations. In Maryland, each institution of higher education decides whether or not to award credit and how the credit may be used. In addition, award of credit at all institutions is dependent on acceptance by the institution.

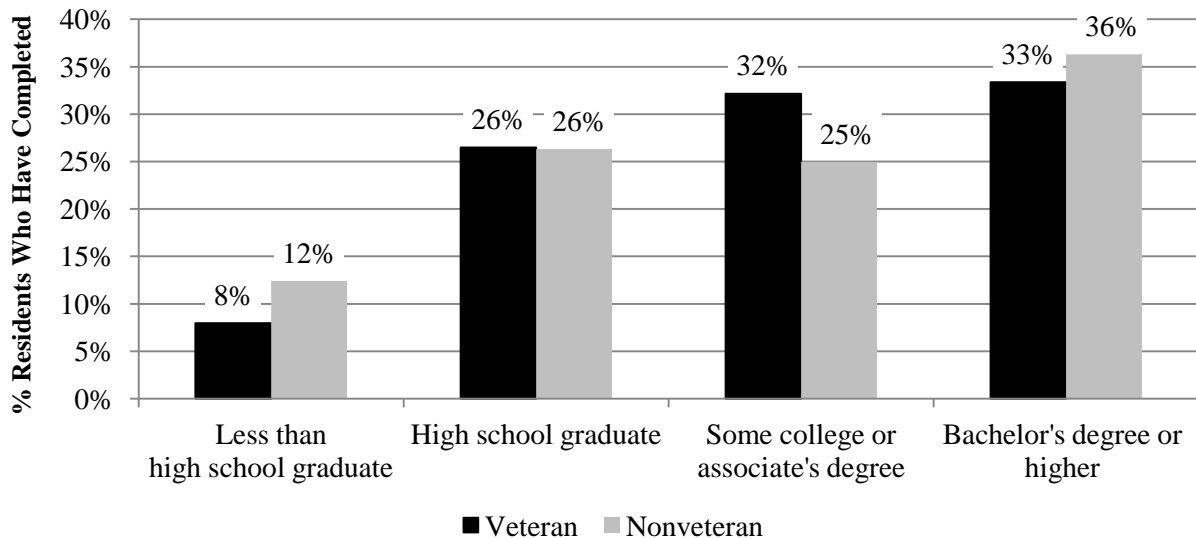
According to the University System of Maryland Board of Regents policy, an institution may provide its undergraduate students with opportunities to earn up to 60 semester credit hours by examination. Such credits may be awarded through standardized examinations such as those in the AP program, CLEP, or through portfolio assessment or institutional examinations conducted by the faculty of the institution in the appropriate discipline. The total amount of credit earned through either institutionally developed examinations or portfolio assessment may not exceed 30 semester credit hours. At each institution, the source of such credit must be identified on the student's permanent record.

Morgan State University (MSU) awards college credit for basic military training upon presentation of a valid Record of Military Service. MSU also accepts eligible ACE credits and Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support Standardized Subject Test for credit. In addition, MSU awards credit for AP, IB, and CLEP examinations.

St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM) awards credit for military training on a case-by-case basis, depending on whether the training relates to course work offered at the college. SMCM also awards credit for certain standardized examinations such as AP, IB, and CLEP. The number of credit hours to be awarded for each examination is determined by the chair of the appropriate department, in consultation with the relevant faculty. Credit by examination may be counted only as lower-division credit and may not total more than 45 credit hours.

The educational attainment of veterans and nonveterans in the State is compared in **Exhibit 1**. The exhibit shows that a higher percentage of Maryland veterans have some college or an associate's degree, but a lower percentage hold a bachelor's degree or higher.

Exhibit 1
Educational Attainment of Veterans and Nonveterans
Age 25 and Older in Maryland
2007-2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey

The Governor's proposed fiscal 2014 budget for UMCP includes \$1.4 billion in unrestricted revenue, which comprises tuition and fee revenues, State appropriations, and auxiliary (self-supporting) revenues. UMB's fiscal 2014 budget includes \$557.5 million of unrestricted revenues.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City Community College, Maryland Higher Education Commission, Morgan State University, St. Mary's College of Maryland, University System of Maryland, U.S. Department of Defense, Service Members Opportunity Colleges Consortium, U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Legislative Services

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