

## **Response to House Bill 488**

### **Scheduling Priority for Veteran/Military Services Students**

Some points to consider by USO campuses:

- The law goes into effect at the end of calendar year 2014, so we could look at having a priority structure in place for either Wi/Sp'15 OR Su/Au'15 registration. Starting for Wi'15 might be rushing based on some of the following points.
- How do we identify our veterans/military service member population? Many of us do not currently have a "clean/easy" tracking structure yet in place. This will be needed for identifying appropriate students for registration priority. We also anticipate that at some point in the near future, OBOR will ask for data on these students. For example, we may relatively easily be able to track those for whom we are already extending military benefits, but what about veterans/service members who are not? Do we know who they are? Do they self-identify, etc.? USO institutions will want to decide how best to implement a tracking structure, both for current and incoming students. OBOR is also working with representatives from the Common Application to address suggested wording related to identifying veteran/military service members in the application/admissions process.
- Family members, even if receiving benefits, do not need to be included with registration priorities.
- The "level" of registration priority is not specified, so each institution will want to have a discussion about "where" in the prioritization process this group should fall. For example, our highest priority group at OSU includes disabled students, university-level honors students and student-athletes. But, we have separate priority levels for graduating students, what we refer to as "college" priority students, etc. Recently, our faculty governance committee that would set registration priorities decided that it would be appropriate to provide scheduling priority for "Veteran and Military Service Students" in alignment with Rank 4 students, unless the student already has a higher priority (e.g. the Veteran is also an honors student). We want to make sure that veterans and military service students are moving through their academic programs in effectively alignment with the time limits on their benefits, and to recognize their service.
- This appears to relate only to the initial registration process, so it would not be necessary to build some type of priority structure into later/walk-through registration. If a veteran/military services student comes to your attention only close to the beginning of the term (e.g. a late admit), your institution COULD try to provide some priority for that student, but there is not an expectation that we develop a structure that doesn't already exist at that point. For those students, we all typically do the "best that we can" later in the registration process - but without any guarantees.
- This initiative may be particularly challenging for an institution without any current registration priority structure. Such an institution may want to use this as an opportunity to consider priorities for other student groups, or just focus on veteran/military service members.