I.FIRST DAY, FIRST OFFICE HOUR:

**(Syllabus, Classroom Tone, office hour situational awareness: accommodations, not exceptions)**

**A)BRIEFING:** First day of class begins: You have 15, 20, 30, 40 students. You do some kind of icebreaker activity, you give out or web-link to a syllabus, explain your course requirements, start a lesson or some kind or assessment.   
  
Do you need to ask if there are veterans in class? Will the student veterans during the icebreaker session stand up and say “I’m active duty, or I was Army”? Should you presume some topics or conversation will create conflict or disruption in class? Is one of the no shows on first day a student veteran who’s been dropped for issues or delays with benefits paperwork processing? Is there anything you should presume or expect to be different with group activities or particular subject matter or discussions because you have some student veterans in class, and some were combat deployed? Maybe you went over a section on syllabi about the veteran services office (if you have one) or mentioned PTSD help available from disability offices? Will the burner from lab procedures lead to a PTSD trigger? Did you just nod or ‘thank them for their service’ or even lead some clapping in class for student veterans? Was that appropriate to do? Did you figure this from their BDU or their posture & desert cammo backpack, or guess at it by their seating, or maybe you overheard two or three veterans talk about their time in the service (they can usually spot each other , or maybe they registered together upon recommendations from the secret list of prof recommendations at SVO)? Wait, could one of those you think is a veteran based on behavior and dress be a spouse or child of a veteran, or someone taking their ABSCAM exam soon? You spotted the likely military males, but did you figure out if any of the women in class were veterans? Was this different for the composition class versus the math or business class? Do you think the same thing happened in the nursing class, or in introduction to administration of justice, or the large chemistry class with 10 sections of lab? [hyperlink each Q to relevant sections]

You don’t need to answer all these; you don’t need to prep for many of these situations other than know they exist.

**B)QUICK TIPS for** I. FIRST DAY, FIRST OFFICE HOUR:

**1)** **Prep Vet Friendly’ SECTIONS FOR THE SYLLABUS: 1) Identify campus ‘coordinating points’ of contact for student veterans; 2)statement that student must be declared service person or vet to ‘activate classroom accommodations’, 3)Attendance/Appts/’stops going’ policy; 4)what to do if rapidly deployed; 5)Fail vs dropped rules; 6)classroom code of conduct/rules**

**2)** **Set a classroom tone of accommodation, not exceptions.  
  
3)** **Prep yourself: look at a list some of the potential classroom/office hour scenarios as a sort of ‘preflight’ checklist reminder before classes start, and definitely before a veteran student makes an office hour visit for one of those checklist reasons**;

**4)** **(Buddy Aid): Don’t just calendar-in due dates: pre-emptively, or if office hr/early alert is related to time management, suggest developing a unified calendar that includes family, military, etc milestones and events**

**C)LEARNING MODULE 1: FIRST DAY, FIRST OFFICE HOUR:**

The syllabus is the ‘contract’ between student and instructor. A few well placed sentences will prevent misunderstandings (academic, ethical, and legal) and clarify what student veterans need to do/be aware of as responsibilities as a student. Check with your student affairs or faculty development contact for existing ‘student veterans’ language for the syllabus or for how to create/template such.

**QUESTION: Should I include a separate section for student veteran issues, or deal with the policies in the appropriate parts of my existing syllabus (eg attendance policy, grading)?**

**Suggestion: Recommend having a separate section labeled “For Active Duty/Reserves/Student Veterans” on the syllabus** Students don’t read the syllabus -- It’s so common a reality that there are internet jokes and memes and T-shirts for sale that say “It’s on the syllabus” or “Read the Syllabus”. Student veterans are not necessarily any different, however, having understood the value of contracts (sign up for 4 years?) and orders/commands, they typically **WILL** pay attention to a section that says “For Active Duty/Student Veterans.” For purely self-interest reasons, then, I strongly **recommend having a separate section labeled “For Active Duty/Reserves/Student Veterans” on the syllabus.** Make sure to include the active duty and reserves in the title/caption since some currently active may not identify themselves as veterans, yet.

**\***[Click here to SEE A PDF SAMPLE ‘Vet Friendly’ SYLLABUS](http://newclassroom/syllabussample.pdf)

\* LOOK for the syllabus section labeled, “**For Active Duty/Reserves/Student Veterans** “

\*Sample includes these subsections: **Prep syllabus policies for : 1) Identify campus ‘coordinating points’ of contact for student veterans; 2)statement that must be declared service person or vet to ‘activate classroom accommodations’, 3)Attendance/Appts/’stops going’ policy; 4)what to do if deployed; 5)Fail vs dropped rules; 6)classroom code of conduct/rules**

1. **6 ‘Vet Friendly’ SECTIONS TO PREP & INCLUDE IN THE SYLLABUS:**

**1)Identify ‘coordinating points’ of contact For Active Duty/Reserves/Student Veterans**

Along with standard student services (tutoring, disabilities center, teaching and learning centers, etc), there are specific resources for active duty, reserve, or student veterans.

**FIRST: Clarify a few common academic terms applicable to new student veterans and campus ‘coordinating points.’**

**1a)’Military Educational Benefits’ in the college are called or handled by the office of**  **‘financial aid.’**   
**1b) Identify Veteran services or Veteran office’s hours and contact information, especially web pages**. If there are different coordinators for benefits certifying, advisement, and a faculty Liaison, list each and their different roles (briefly). Also mention if there is a SVO and that details for it are often listed on campus website under “Student or Campus Clubs.” Mention that these services/offices/officers handle educational benefits and other academic concerns for current active duty and reserves AS WELL AS Veteran students.  
**1c) Instructor office hour appointments are ‘highly suggested’ for questions related to class and required if having trouble / unclear about class**

**‘Office hour prep’ NOTE FOR FACULTY: YOU SPOKE TO WHO? YOU NEED TO SEE… :**while simply listing on the syllabus the General Veteran Services or Veteran Student Center phone # and website are fine, there are some common TITLES that FACULTY should be aware of related to serving student veterans:

TYPICALLY, there are two or three individuals that SPLIT/coordinate several of these functions – except for well resourced, mature veteran services departments. But you may hear these mentioned/need to refer to them or their duties in an early office hour meeting with a transitioning student veteran:

Common titles and duties include:  
a) Benefits Certifying Officer   
b) Veteran Services Coordinator  
c) Faculty Liaison for Student Veterans  
d) Military Service Student academic advisor  
e)Student Veterans Outreach Coordinator  
f)Counseling/ Veteran’s Specialist  
g)Veteran’s Administration Liaison on campus  
h)Veteran Services tutors or mentors

**2)Reminder to identify to instructor (after class/in private) as a student veteran/reserve/active duty personnel, if, might be activating accommodations (if any):** Active duty, reserve, or student veterans should identify as such with their instructor if they are requesting any service related accommodations (quick deployment potential and action plan, PTSD trigger awareness, seating arrangement needs, possible VA hospital or service related appointments) and register with DSS (Disability Support Services), DRC (Disability Resource Center) or equivalent for documentable disabilities (extended test time, hearing or vision technology needs, interpreters, note takers, service animals, etc).   
  
The biggest problem (conflict?) comes when a student veteran needs to excuse absences for a VA appointment that cannot be rescheduled…and the instructor first hears that the student is a veteran/has this need AFTER the event or the office hour before the appointment.

Some student veterans don’t wish to self identify, especially in public. However veterans, reserve and active duty are also very aware about reading the ‘fine print’ in contracts. A few sentences explaining why, and the suggestion that self identifying can be in private, written in the syllabus, alerts the instructor to possible accommodation needs way ahead of time and allows for planning such as proctored testing arrangement (or at least, the instructor being aware their services may be put to use), note share, larger font printouts or arrangement for note takers or speech to text resources.

One caution: If all veteran documentation for accommodations are done through a Disabilities Services Office, make sure to clarify to the active, reserve or student veteran that you are aware ‘being a veteran isn’t a disability…that it is just a colocation of space that centralizes paperwork there.’

**3)ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Every higher education syllabus has a section **on attendance requirements**, maximum amount of absences or missed work, before a student is dropped (or failed) from the class, and often a definition of what excused absences are. Include:  
 Reasons for Excusable absences for student veterans must be presented as early as possible (VA appointments, medical procedures (eg surgery) including pre and post recovery periods, training).  
Students who simply stop attending classes will be dropped, with possible consequences including need for student to pay VA back for course and possibly for book and/or housing allowance. Active duty or Student Veterans who need to stop a class need to make contact with the instructor before separation if at all possible and make arrangements based on school policy and syllabus language. Same applies for medical, rehabilatory or other separations.

**4)What to do if rapidly deployed**: For active duty and reserves, turn around from notification to ‘report for duty’ can be as little as 72 hours when deployed/redeployed. [18)Patterson, Bates, Wheeler (league of innovation)]. Some students may be in classes while talking to recruiters and taking ASVAB (The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery ) exams. Resourcse online from places like MarineParents.com checklist how to prepare for everything from ‘military suspension’ for leases and loans, to Packing and arranging Power of Attorney . <http://www.marineparents.com/deployment/terminology.asp>) Most schools don’t have one of these checklists ready for dealing with classes midway into the semester; rarer still are faculty trained how to handle these rapid deployments. Every class taken is different; student should discuss during office hours with instructors contingency plans or preferences for separation from classes due to deployment. Options may include an incomplete class contract (difficult since end dates of deployment are often not available), drops, F’s. Issues include where to return materials, grades (if possible) based on existing work only, etc. The syllabus should at least mention that if rapid deployments or redeployments for active and reserve are possible, please discuss with faculty possible contingency plans.

**5) VA Policy if you Stop Attending Class**:

Even if the drop policy for all students is on another section of the syllabus, a few quick lines under the active duty, reserve, student veterans section can clarify risk and eliminate problems before they happen.

The F vs the drop: If a student veteran simply stops attending class, especially in the first half of the semester before establishing a grade or before a ‘can still drop’ deadline given by the college, many instructors have no choice other than to follow the policy of giving that student a DROP or W grade. The VA, however, will only pay for a class that is completed with a grade, whether it’s A, B, C, D or F. If a student simply stops attending or is ‘dropped’ or ‘withdraws,’ for attendance or missing work, the VA typically requires the student to pay back the cost of the course and risks the possible loss of full time student status can affect any further disbursements of housing allowance (if any) and other educational benefits. This is a policy that many military service students and instructors are not aware of until it becomes a problem with monies involved, which can quickly escalate into a bill/debt. Some instructors willing to give an F instead of a W or drop may still face problems when they are asked to report last day of attendance: giving an F, when last day of attendance was too early to have enough graded materials completed for a calculated grade of F, can trigger an audit or still require repayment to the VA.

**a)Add an awareness statement:** Include a statement such as ‘Although the VA typically will pay for a student to retake a required course finished with a grade of F ONCE, Students using military benefits (including family benefits) should not just stop attending class regardless the reason, as it may, in keeping with college policy, result in a drop grade instead of an F, that can affect benefits, full time student status, and potentially require the student veteran or beneficiary to pay back the course cost. Active duty, reserves, and student veterans should contact their instructor and benefits certifying officer before withdrawing from the course to understand the impact on repayment of the course. “

**b)Research your school’s policy/decide on your personal approach to the issue:** If there are different school rules concerning medically related drops or deployment related drops, make sure to list them here or at least be aware of them for when the drop vs F issue arises in your class (for example, some colleges will absorb the cost of the course for one of the latter reasons. This policy is at the college level – may or may not exist). Some schools have specific policies allowing an instructor to give an **incomplete grade** for deployments, medical emergencies, and other qualifying events. The main issue with incompletes is that by a certain date and contract the rest of the content of the course must be completed or the grade otherwise turns to an F. The grade past the last day of classes then becomes ‘suspended’, ‘TBA,’ or “Incomplete” -- a status that may still trigger the VA billing the student veteran for the course. Consult your benefits certifying officer, financial aid office, and school policy, as this condition may still yield the negative result of billed for a class.

**c)A few approaches:** Instructor can OPTIONALLY include a few approaches to dealing with a drop for military service students:  
c1) The instructor, if allowed and chooses to do so, can grant an F if mathematically they still have enough graded assessments and attendance from the student to justify such. Again, be aware that most schools require a ‘last date of attendance’ when granting an F grade.  
  
c2)New VA policy (Fall 2014) may still NOT require repayment, or at least pay for a retake, even if the last date of attendance is not the official last day of classes. Typically the student still needs an F grade on record… check with your financial aid/benefits certifying official for latest treatment of this policy.

C3)Some instructors will arrange an alternative course completion contract with the student veteran (if their division and syllabus allows), where the student veteran will meet with the instructor a few times during office hours to discuss strategies for success and sometimes course content, and/or generate an alternative ‘reflection’ type assignment on how they will better be able to complete the course, on retake, next round. These meetings should be a few times throughout the remainder of the semester including a visit during office hours on the final week. The student therefore is NOT stopping the class, but is participating and ‘attending’ in an alternative way up to the last day of classes and interacting with the instructor (even if only by email). Of course, by not handing in all required assignments and content for the class, they can only earn a F for the course. This alternative contract to get an F rather than a drop/W grade depends upon the instructor, support from their department, adherence to school policies, and the student NOT skipping out on the required meetings. A signed contract/adjusted syllabus [similar to incomplete grade contracts] is standard. Consult your benefits certifying officer before implementing such a policy. Make sure that you have a statement on the syllabus somewhere that grants ‘instructor the right to modify the syllabus calendar as necessary’ in order to be able to activate this option.

**6) Code of Classroom Conduct**: The classroom (physical or virtual) is considered middle ground/safe space for discussions of many points of view. Standards of respect and an etiquette code of conduct will be discussed by the instructor. Instructor may then introduce or discuss school, department, and classroom ‘touchstones’, etiquette, and/or ‘safe space’ or ‘sacred ground’ rules for participation in the classroom.

**\*This is one set of policy language that can be left out of the Military personnel/Student Veteran section of the syllabus as long as it is brought up and discussed in other sections of the syllabus**.

That the classroom is middle ground or safe space for discussion of all points of view is very important. Second, the instructor must be ready and able to play ‘devil’s advocate’ constantly. Framing this ‘safe space’ without politics is the challenge. Keys are using existing models or policy of your school on civil discussion and academic freedom in the classroom. Netiquette and conversation etiquette (no shouting/no caps, for example) plus confidentiality, respect, understanding that impact can create ill will or offense even if intention is not to do so, that every viewpoint has intentional and unintentional agendas , are the most basic code of classroom conduct rules that need to be made clear. Some of the more common models in academics include Parker Palmer’s Touchstones (<http://www.couragerenewal.org/wpccr/wp-content/uploads/touchstones-poster.pdf>) or variants such as the version (http://www.couragerenewal.org/wpccr/wp-content/uploads/touchstones-poster.pdf ) though the language itself may be pereceived as ‘political.’ However, if you as instructor make it clear you will play devil’s advocate on all sides, that those different POVs are not personal attacks on anyone’s personal choices or the voice of authority (the instructor), then the code of conduct is legitimized. That these ‘safe space for multiple viewpoints’ have rules for conversation and classroom engagement. If you don’t then you have politics taking precedence over discussion and the rules as opposed to inclusive environments in the classroom. Cynicism and satire and gallows humor are common to a lot of student veterans. With many students, idealistic words of various philosophies ring so good and true; many veterans have seen or through their experiences begun to believe that words and their conversion to action don’t necessarily align.

Brad Warner/Hardcore Zen: "That's the easiest way to tell the real teachers from the phonies: a phony will take your authority and a real teacher will give it back."

1. **Set a Classroom tone of accommodation, not exceptions.:**

**Simply listing on the syllabus or making it clear from day 1 that you will accommodate but not make exceptions to the ‘contract’ of the syllabus is the best approach**. As faculty you have your course content, assessment standards, and responsibilities to validate your students’ abilities and progress, as signified by the grade earned. **You do NOT alter this for student veterans. You ACCOMMODATE needs that have arisen from their experiences and demands as people in military service, but otherwise teach your class to the same pace, standards and demands of the general population**. The single most important thing to remember is that student veterans are in transition: whether returning to the classroom after completion of service in the military or separation by medical retirement, going to higher education for the first time for the learning and/or or for skills and access to better employment, or finding a middle ground between deployment readiness and leading lives of hurrying up to wait as reserves or active duty – education is one factor in a life of changes and adapting.

**Reasons and reminders why classroom tone of accommodation, not exceptions, works** (covered in more detail in the STEREOTYPES module and the PHYSICAL ISSUES and NON-VISIBLE ISSUES modules):

Most student veterans transition fine and adapt to education –once they understand and buy-in to academic culture. **Accommodations (IF needed) give student veterans a fair shake at opportunity**, and that’s the extent of their ‘special’ treatment from faculty. If you make an exception to expectations for one student based on their status as active, reserve or veteran, for disability, combat experience, heroism, sympathy for their service, you can be sure that word of this special treatment will spread and you will lose credibility and respect with others.

Student veterans (and active duty and reserves) represent the same complete diversity of other types of students in higher education, when it comes to ambition, social, economic backgrounds, interests and reasons for going to college.

PTSD is a real factor for many student veterans. Some will hide it, some will seek help, some will have documentation (20%, 30%, 70% VA diagnosis), but **many** will go their entire time in college unaffected by it… or at least, function as students without it having a direct impact on their visible performance in the classroom.

Education is a mini-universe of the diversity and differences of opinions, interests, and open options in the ‘real world’ outside of military service. You want to help your student veterans adapt to this ‘real world’ where their personal views may or may not be those popular with others.

Bigger issues than PTSD (looking at the whole of the general military service student population) are time management, overwhelming amount of options rather than structured routes and ‘maps’ and checklists for what and how to do things, developmental needs from being out of school or past problems with schools and studying, and outside issues. Existing student services, with maybe some variation in implementation (an academic advisor familiar with GI Bill ‘rules’; tutoring in the comfort zone of a veteran’s lounge instead of the noisy crowded tutoring commons, etc) are there to help. If you point student veterans to SVO and your college’s veteran services, you’ve helped massively with their specific needs to find help related to military life related issues. Again, as faculty, you accommodate student veterans but make it clear that they general population rules apply, and this helps with their transition and success in academia.

Leadership and character and respect are values held high in the military, but as with any diverse population, mileage may vary: Veteran students will rise to a high bar, but some will drop out rather than seek help, some will not ‘instantly’ take up leadership in groups or be realistic of how much work it takes to get through a particular course. Like any other college population, some may try to trade on status or presumptions of military character for ‘exceptions’ to deadlines and requirements. Some will gripe about the work required. A few will have (or create) issues with the instructor and their teaching style or content. A few will have conflict with other students’ behavior, attitudes, backgrounds, politics or opinions. A few may even be so ‘general population’ as to resort to plagiarism and cheating. Inform clearly of standards and etiquettes for classroom achievement and student interactions that apply to ALL, and stick to them. That shows the kind of expected respect and integrity student veterans will remember from their service.

1. **Sample SCENARIOS for 1st day, first office hour (prep yourself)**

**HOW TO: Teachable Moment strategy or Faculty Development exercise for SCENARIOS**: The best way to teach scenarios is to print each (without suggestions/starter solutions), randomize and give each to a work group (faculty, student veterans steering committee, mixed membership learning group, etc) or individual participants at faculty development and have them brainstorm and share solutions.  
**WHY?** The suggestions/starter solutions usually work, but don’t take into account ‘mileage may vary’ localization: your university or college’s culture, demographics, geography, and existing experience with or lack of exposure to student veteran populations. Participation also encourages buy-in from your specific cohort, and exposes specific blindspots and resources for your particular group, not to mention all the value of active learning. You can then compare/contrast group sourcing of scenario solutions to the starter solutions below and mediate as necessary. The specific ‘builds’ on the shoulders of the general/generic suggested approach.

1st day, 1st office hour: SCENARIO 1: **Issue concerning Hat or Jacket or Insignia worn in class or at campus event**:  
There are several versions of this scenario: A)Hat during exam day (Well documented Sample scenario from U of A: DVRE – Disabled Veterans Reintegration & Education Project; B) Others NOT removing hats during a pledge of allegiance or flag related ceremony; C)Hat worn in class everyday (for comfort, totemic, promise-keeping) and D) reaction to ironic, slogan, or 'unearned' clothing worn by other students

A)\_Hat during exam day:

B)\_ Others NOT removing hats during a pledge of allegiance or flag related ceremony

C)\_ Hat worn in class everyday

D) reaction to ironic, slogan, or 'poser' clothing worn by other students (eg Kent State bloodied shirt)

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Recommendation:**

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 1’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Recommendation:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

SCENARIO 2: **Seating**

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Recommendation:**

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 2’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Recommendation:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

SCENARIO 3: **Don’t know if I’m ready for college”**

Scenario: ‘Don’t know if I’m ready for college” [Some of the same issues as remedial or adult returning learners as shown by “Life gets in the way” presentation, Arkansas Statue University, Dr. Martha Shull, Dr Allen Mooneyhan, Ms Stacy Mooneyhan – League of Innovations]: [paraphrased] better themselves, improve job option, set example for siblings/family, feel equal to others in age group or family, parent or family’s ‘dream’, ‘tired of seeing less qualified’ getting promotions because of degree or certification, ‘nothing much else to do vs free money’, face up to challenge]  
Scenario: Gives inappropriate student comment, response, remark (gender, racial, judgment/putdown of opinion. ‘you’re just a fucking baby never seen the world. What do you know”)

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Recommendation:**

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 3’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Recommendation:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

SCENARIO 4: **Veteran new to a disability (hearing, seeing etc) adjusting**

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Recommendation:**

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 4’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Recommendation:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

SCENARIO 5: You received 1st day of class a notification from your disability student services office/ADA compliance officer of student with percent certified PTSD disability, or Student Veteran self identifies as diagnosed with PTS on first day and you are concerned about what could be a particular trigger.

Every case is different. What percent certified PTSD disability 20% 50% 70% 100% (rare)

Types of content that could have triggers:

Simulation

Case studies  
creative demonstrations  
Walkthroughs  
Roleplays/reenactments (eg Natural disasters simulation)

Creative writing/personal exploratory writing

Journalistic topics related to war

Group presentation

[again, imperative is accommodation/not exceptions. Problems are usually in non-major required classes with ‘pop’ demos etc, as most student veterans in a major are more likely to expect what occurs that could be a trigger.]

By discipline, some sample triggers:

Biology:

Cardiology simulations:  
Dissection (frog, cow eye, fetal pig, etc)  
Bone fracture simulation/testing  
Nocturnal behavior simulation (simulating being blind)  
Visible Human  
Deep brain stimulation  
Animal captivity and response  
study of nurtured/abandoned animals  
Skull identification  
Crime scene/forensics  
Bioterrorism

Business:  
International business/cross cultural communication  
Human Trafficking  
smuggling/trade during wartime  
Global economic crisis  
Cultural misunderstandins  
Human rights

Chemistry/Physics:  
Explosions/combustion demos, Bunsen burner, popping balloons, firecrackers  
Gases  
Use of Burners  
Remote control frequencies  
Riding rollercoasters

Psychology  
Abnormal Psychology  
Abuse of children  
Re-enactment of the Stanford Prison Experiment  
Ethics  
Sensory perception  
Saliency maps/computer vision/neural vision/attention systems (especially for high focus test images)

Video Production

Engineering:  
Soldering/metalwork

Firescience:

Nursing: Auscultation (breathing sounds)  
  
Criminal Justice  
Victim walkthrough/roleplay  
profiling  
Interrogation  
Prison studies  
Death penalty/treatment of minors

Real worry of triggers is when several factors align: Anniversary, current events (beheadings on TV), and topic

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 5’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

TEACHABLE MOMENT STRATEGY:

SCENARIO 6: First day: Avoiding ‘stop drops’ that are presumed as F’s but that you have to report as ‘no show’ or ‘drop’.

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 6’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

TEACHABLE MOMENT STRATEGY:

SCENARIO 7: **Other student gives inappropriate student comment related to role in war during first day ice breaker (babykillers, wasted your life, ‘toy soldiers’)**

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Recommendation:**

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 7’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Recommendation:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

SCENARIO 8: **After the first day of classes/discussion of syllabus, a Reserve, Active Duty, or Student Veteran requests alternative class content, an alternative service learning opportunity ( eg a presentation during Reserves Training on urban combat techniques, etc) or an alternative assignments/events (warns of potential PTSD trigger by being in an extremely overcrowded event such as serving in a hunger banquet, a trips on syllabus to memorials or cultural event (Sufi performance, report on Muslim rights rally, etc)**

Eg Hunger Banquet

http://www.aaup.org/report/trigger-warnings

A few of my colleagues are starting to pass this around, an article that has been used at other colleges as a umbrella stall on including a statement on every syllabus about vet friendly accommodations (this is what's happened at other colleges) because of potential conflict of someone using PTSD to say they don't want to complete some content.   Their LEGIT worry is using this to politically or religiously refuse work (what the article is actually about).  I personally don't care about the course 'content' choice part, fine with staying true to every instructor's choices , but it's been used at other schools as a de facto justification to delay including a section on vet friendly accommodation, period, across the board.  If you get any questions about this, just refer them to me and the spirit in which we will propose vet syllabus section to Aaron Aguire at end of 2014/ for the committee for syllabi requirements, which is focused under: 'accommodation, not exceptions'.

Easy Example to illustrate (because it's Disability Act related):

Class requires a climb off trail for field work  
Someone without legs is in the class.

This activity IS listed in the class syllabus and a Vets Section says 'accomodation, not exception'

1)For a geology class where this activity is part of the course requisites from the district, this would be an exception -- on the syllabus as required and the vet student may not be able to complete that requirement.   Might have to drop.

2)For a ENG101 course where the instructor is just a nature lover and includes this not as a MCCCD requirement, but a personal 'learning activity', should be made clear on syllabus before first day or if not 'accommodation' would be required.

Harder Example (applicable to some veteran situations):

Class requires viewing and deeply studying the opening invasion scene of Saving Private Ryan with its heavy casualty and mutilation scenes.

Someone with medically noted PTSD as a combat medic vet says they can't do that assignment.

This activity IS listed in the class syllabus and a Vets Section says 'accommodation, not exception'

1)It's for a film class studying the techniques used in filming those scenes.   part of the course requisites from the district, so this would be an exception -- on the syllabus as required -- and the vet student may not be able to complete that requirement.  Might have to drop.

2)This activity is for a ENG102 that (teacher's choice, not district listed as requirement/requisite of ENG102) is taught by a particular instructor using their 'favorite film' --- Saving Private Ryan.  The student could do a similar analysis of film storytelling elements with another film (note this is NOT a film class, so it's a personal choice of instructor to use a film like Ryan).  This, in my opinion would be  an 'accommodation' though ONLY if the PTSD is documented.  Otherwise the instructor's could stand on the issue as an example of transitioning the student to the academic world.

**DOES IT GO BOTH WAYS? I am a student in a film class or women’s study. I want to do a presentation using the 9 minute single take Rape Scene from** Gaspar Noé's **Irreversible**The length of the rape scene in that film is important. The reason for this is that if you portray rape as something that is over very quickly it helps trivialise it.

**Why did MMI (Minority Male) Initiative have to change its name to MEN (Men Empowerment Network)**

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Recommendation:**

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 8’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Recommendation:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

SCENARIO 9: **Request for service animal in class**

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Recommendation:**

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 9’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Recommendation:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

SCENARIO 10:  **Office hour visit to relate will have ‘transition trouble’ working in a collaborative group due to cultural identity of a group member (as opposed to simply personality conflict)**

**Your task**: write down or collaborate on the following:

**ISSUE/RISK**:

**Recommendation:**

**Questions, Prevention, Prep**:

**Impact**:

SCENARIO 10’s SUGGESTIONS/Starter Solutions:

ISSUE/RISK:

Recommendation:

Questions, Prevention, Prep:

Impact:

SCENARIO 11: enrolled in a class that is considered an elective/not in their major **D) Sample Scenarios and What if’s   
for FIRST DAY, FIRST OFFICE HOUR**

**Eg ask student: what causes you anxiety?**

**Use** [**https://www.remind.com/**](https://www.remind.com/)

**Communicate expectations of next class**

**You are not a counselor/refer it!**

**Study groups leveraging: round robin summaries of chapters**

Scenario/ issue at risk/ questions, prevention&prep/ impact/

Scenario: Meds Behavior  
Scenario: hat

Several versions: Hat during exam day (Sample scenario from U of A: DVRE – Disabled Veterans Reintegration & Education Project

Summarizing from their website: A student veteran is taking an exam in a large auditorium style classroom. A proctor requests anyone wearing hats to switch them backwards/brim behind them. This is to prevent cheating, but no one ever says this. For the veteran student this is just something disrespectful and anti-behavior code (‘Hands out of pockets’ means anything to veterans out there?). Refuses, escalates, student asked to leave exam room.  
Later resolved when the student veteran and professor explain the issues.

3)Removing hats during a pledge of allegiance or flag related ceremony.

FAC DEV <http://drc.arizona.edu/veterans-reintegration-education/increasing-awareness/faculty-development/characteristics>) “Olivia, a twenty-nine-year-old who served in OIF as a Humvee mechanic, explained an incident that arose during her first exam in a large introductory course of 400 students in physical sciences. Olivia described the incident:

Ten minutes into the test, the professor hollers out, "Hey, everybody turn your hats around backwards." And I don't wear my hat backwards, you know?  Like you don't do that in the military, you know?  We just had a soldier get in trouble for that this summer.  He was wearing his hat backwards, goofing around and the Command Sergeant Major walked in and the whole command got smoked for it, you know?  You just don't do it and you don't make someone turn their hat around backward.  Like that's disrespectful.” Olivia had no idea why it was required to turn her hat backward, and so refused to do so based on her military ethics. The teaching assistants proctoring the exam told her to turn hat around, and to make matters worse, called Olivia “a guy” in the process.  When asked to turn her hat around, Olivia refused again and began to get upset. The professor came up and asked, "Why won't you turn your hat around?"  Olivia responded, “Because it's degrading, I won't do it.”  The professor replied, "Then get out."  Olivia handed her test in and walked out.

Subsequently, Olivia made amends with the professor and was able to recover from the incident. She later met with the professor and learned that the policy on hats is aimed at preventing students from cheating by using notes written on the underside of the hat’s bill. In their face to face meeting, the professor was very understanding of Olivia’s stance, and allowed her to average her tests scores to make up for the missed exam. The larger importance of the incident stems from the conflict between the professor academic policy and Olivia’s ethical code

The central conflict in the Hat Incident was between two codes of conduct, one academic and one stemming from the US Army. Many student veterans have internalized their military codes of conduct so strongly that they would risk their academic standing in order to stay true to their personal code of conduct.

2)Hat in class

Hat worn during everyday class.

SCENARIOS:

Scenario:   
Scenario:   
Scenario: Scenario:   
Scenario:

Scenario:

**E)**: **Links and Localization:** A few recommended related links

Set guidelines/touchstones.

YOUR WHAT IF: PREP CHECKLIST:

10 word answer: deep what if

**SYLLABUS STATEMENT and politics:**Heads up:

**SYLLABUS:**

Parts of standard syllabus of relevance to student veterans:

Book versions with add-ons/optionals: MyWriting Lab, publisher resources, tutoring site etc. GI Bill book sipend will cover it

Syllabus: What’s the difference between drop and F. If disappear, stops showing up to class, with communication, without enough material to justify and F, will be dropped which means student has to pay up and return housing stiped.

Points of discussion: When does group work become too much share/cheating

Plagiarism explained

Declared = veterans office and/or disabilities center

\*If some personal crisis happens, may take 1-3 days to re-establish communication/ share what’s going on.

“Syllabus is contract”

Suggest time management workshop

Late assignment issues: be prepared to enforce

Dealing w/hard of hearing that do NOT want disability classification

Notes online

SAMPLE SYLLABUS SECTION:

Do not disappear! Drop has financial consequences including housing allowances and paying back course cost  
If activated into service…  
If benefit/paper delay causes drop….  
Conflict in small groups  
If conditions outside of class start to affect class work (PTSD, Bell’s Palsy, etc)

Alternative to drop: must still meet to assess how to beat or prepare for repeat of class (action plan) for next time and must meet last day of classes. No assessments, tests in this state so still gets F (but not drop)

-How to adjust to work schedule change

--tutoring, writing center is part of the ‘success’ team

Ways to find undeclared student veterans:  
initial survey including what was your MOS?

“accommodation not exceptions”

Scheduling ahead of time

Service activities, performances, volunteering

Warn about any tough combo of courses to avoid taking them simultnaously.

--announce prereqs for class

Do not ASSUME previous credit from military etc transfers over

Remind student veterans to make sure class is required or part of major to ensure GI Bill will pay for it  
  
If using special veteran benefits to pay for classes (eg spousal or child benefits, Gold star or otherwise, make sure to meet with Veteran Services Coordinator or certifying officer

**For shock training faculty:** Scenario to simulate to faculty what the layout of campus feels like:  
Have them do a scavenger hunt/quiz of find the location on a military base in military lingo (Mess)

Recommend: Note taking workshops: military training is drilling and hands on and checklists. For some MOS, testing is 2 or 3 times to retake the test but must get 100% to pass. Many take too many, some no notes.

Awareness of ways to lose respect: teachers who are constantly late or casually late will lose respect from vet students. So will those that do not carry out against violations against policies, especially things perceived as disrespectful such as texting in the middle of class.

“You can fail” military teacher often ask any questions as formality, but otherwise move forward w/expectations that the military personnel will learn hands on. This can lead to student bad habit of just nodding away.

In office hrs: If you wind up w Vet asking I don’t know why I’m having trouble w/ X, SVO or work study can be helpful.

As noted in study http://www.ncte.org/library/nctefiles/groups/cccc/anethicalobligation.pdf, “The disconnect of VRCs from academic programs, however, was also very clear. Most VRCs are organized under Student Affairs, and connections to faculty or to classroom practices appear to be limited. While many VRC directors indicated that they had provided training to administrative staff, very few had provided training specifically for faculty, or had limited attendance at facultytraining sessions they did offer" (10)

**Syllabus Statement**: we recommend that instructors include a brief statement on their syllabus that, at the very least, points veterans to the campus VRC or certifying official and communicates the classroom as a safe place. Here is a sample statement from Katt Blackwell--‐Starnes at Georgia Southern University: “I recognize the complexities of being a student veteran. If you are a student veteran, please inform me if you need special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran--‐related developments can complicate your academic life. If you make me aware of a complication, I will do everything I can to assist you or put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you.”. (12, <http://www.ncte.org/library/nctefiles/groups/cccc/anethicalobligation.pdf> )

2: Work w/ Vets Center for a syllabus statement – vet student services coordinators find allies to have a section on syllabus: interested faculty, faculty developers, dept chairs (catch issues/avoid issues before they happen), SVO  
  
2: On syllabus let veterans know about drop means will have to pay for course, refund of housing allowance. Do not just disappear. If you want that F have to meet and consult and agree on certain conditions.  
2: If instructor is a veteran, announce it. Sometimes it overcomes lots and lots of hesitation  
T2:Have a student vet policy in the syllabus (if activated/72 hrs, drops vs F)  
  
T1:End class by communication the expectations of next class  
T2:Some vets like connection, some reserved. Do not suggest office hrs if needed. Schedule it.  
76: One thing that ocassionally is haunting is that non service students in classroom don’t seem to know there is a war going on

77: IF student veteran, Q’s for exit Survey: What were your first days on campus like? What do you know now that you wish you knew then? What strategies would you recommend to other [veteran] students? What is the hardest part of being a college student? What do you miss most about the military?  
72: scenario: MEDS stopped working for student on first day