



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

# Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Academic Initiatives & Student Success

## Veteran Student Experience and Engagement

Spring 2014 | Executive Summary

### SUMMARY

The purpose of the survey is to better understand veteran students' experience and engagement at the University of Arizona (UA). The survey was administered during spring 2014 to all UA student veterans (N=1,101) and elicited an 11.5% response rate (N=127). Results indicate the importance and continued need for support within enrollment, registration, and orientation services. Financial resources, difficulties connecting with others, and balancing daily veteran student life responsibilities creates perceived barriers to student learning and college completion. Findings illustrate supportive opportunities for veteran student persistence to graduation, such as increased student veteran recognition within the campus culture and supplemental financial resources. The present study communicates findings within four main themes: Demographics, Student Services, Challenges to Student Success, and Veteran Student Voices.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

#### Military Affiliation



25% Air Force



47% Army



13% Marines



15% Navy

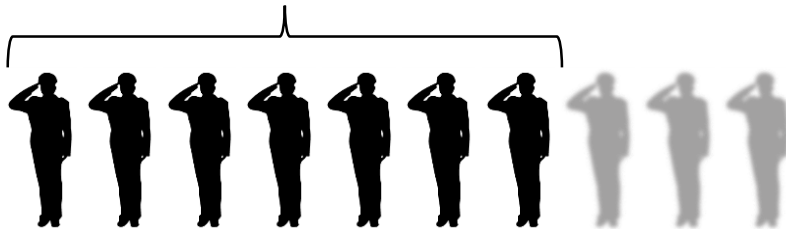
#### Family Life

- 49% are married; 39% have children
- 43% work 20 hours or more each week
- 50% off-campus renting; 45% own home
- 50% live more than 5 miles away from campus

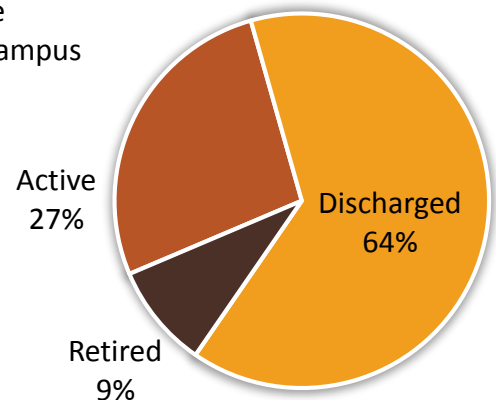
#### Financial Resources

- 63% Employed off-campus
- 35% Not employed
- 30% VA benefits
- 17% Grants
- 10% Scholarships
- 38% Loans
- 17% Family fiscal support

70% agree that the UA is a veteran friendly campus



#### Military Status



## STUDENT SERVICES

### Satisfaction and Usage of Current Services\*

Service	Satisfied	Used
VETS Center	77%	73%
Academic Advising	69%	83%
Registrar services & enrollment	69%	91%
Registrar certification verification	67%	88%
Financial Aid	65%	79%
Transfer Student Services	58%	53%
VETS Club	56%	54%
Career Services	54%	59%
Disability Resource Center	50%	40%
Think Tank	48%	40%
Off-campus housing	38%	45%
Campus Health Services	36%	53%
Classes for veterans (SERV)	33%	36%
Counseling & Psych Services	31%	36%

\*Rating categories Satisfied and Very Satisfied were collapsed and reported as Satisfied

### Top 10 Most Important Services for Veteran Students

1. Retention/Degree completion assistance (73%)
2. One-stop-shop for veterans (69%)
3. Registrar services and enrollment verification (66%)
4. Disability Resource Center (63%)
5. Academic Advising (62%)
6. Credit for military training/service (62%)
7. Information on student veteran legislation (60%)
8. Admissions assistance (60%)
9. UA lobbying state on behalf of student veterans (59%)
10. VA certified counselors on campus (57%)

### Veteran Students in Transition to College

57% of student veterans reported that the use of support services made their transition to UA easier

The top 3 services used while transitioning to college:

1. VETS Center
2. Staff & Faculty Support
3. Enrollment & Financial Aid Access

### Deployment and Transitional Support

Average deployment: 2 years and 7 months

37% deployed once and 30% deployed twice

27% were wounded or injured during deployment

72% served in combat (N = 71)

- Operation Iraqi Freedom (40%)
- Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan (31%)
- Operation Noble Eagle (4%)
- Operation Desert Storm (6%)
- Peace Keeping Mission Abroad (5%)

8% indicated they were deployed as an active UA student

88% of those who were deployed and returned stated UA services were helpful during this transition

### Preferred Communication Methods

78% of veteran students reported knowing who to contact on campus for questions regarding veterans’ services. The following demonstrates preferences of communication and engagement with services. Based on results, services are categorized as follows: Highly preferred in-person services (Above 75%), preferred in-person services (50% - 74%), and opportunities for future online services (Below 49%).

	In-person	Online	No Pref.
<b>Highly Preferred In-Person Services</b>			
Orientation for veterans	84%	5%	11%
Academic Advising	84%	6%	10%
Tutoring specifically for veterans	81%	1%	18%
VA-Certified counselors on campus	78%	5%	17%
One-stop-shop for veterans	75%	7%	18%
<b>Preferred In-Person Services</b>			
Career services advising	73%	7%	20%
VETS Club	65%	5%	30%
Retention/degree completion assistance	65%	12%	23%
Registration assistance	62%	19%	19%
Disability resources	60%	13%	27%
Faculty/staff sensitivity to student veterans training	56%	8%	36%
Healthcare referral for service-related injuries	56%	16%	28%
Services for family members of active duty service members/veterans	55%	13%	32%
Admissions Application Assistance	52%	31%	17%
Classes	51%	19%	30%
Registrar services/enrollment verification	50%	32%	18%
<b>Opportunities for Future Online Services</b>			
UA lobbying state legislature on behalf of veteran students	48%	19%	33%
Credit for military training and service	41%	23%	36%
Marketing and outreach to recruit veterans to enroll at UA	39%	27%	34%
Off-campus referral procedures to address veteran needs	38%	26%	36%
Informing/educating UA student veterans of current state and national veteran legislation	35%	39%	26%
Alternative curriculum delivery	31%	46%	23%

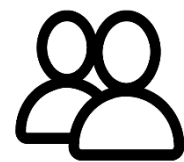
Average preference of communication for all student services



59% In-person



17% Online



24% No Preference

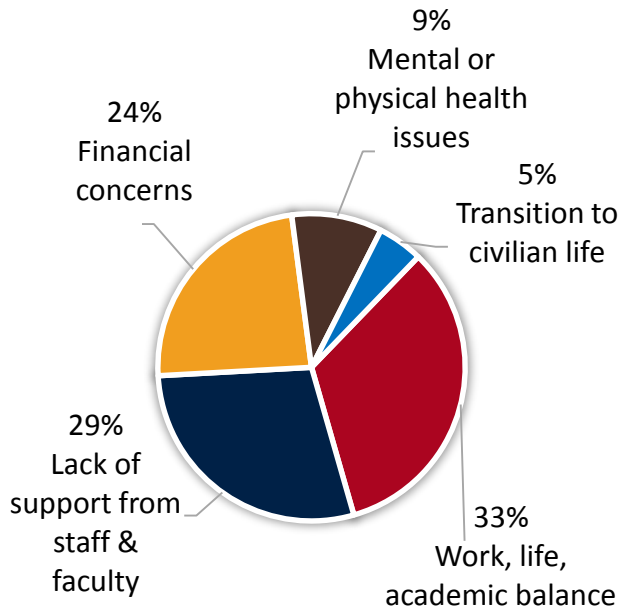
# CHALLENGES TO STUDENT SUCCESS

## Top 4 Challenges to a Successful Transition to UA\*

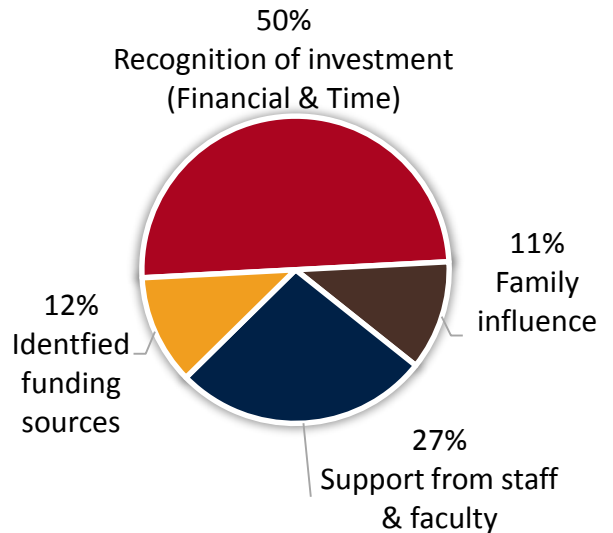
1. Difficulty connecting with others
2. Challenges with enrollment/registration
3. Lack of financial resources
4. Work, life, academic balance

34% of student veterans considered withdrawing from the University of Arizona at least once

### Top Reasons for Withdrawal Consideration\*

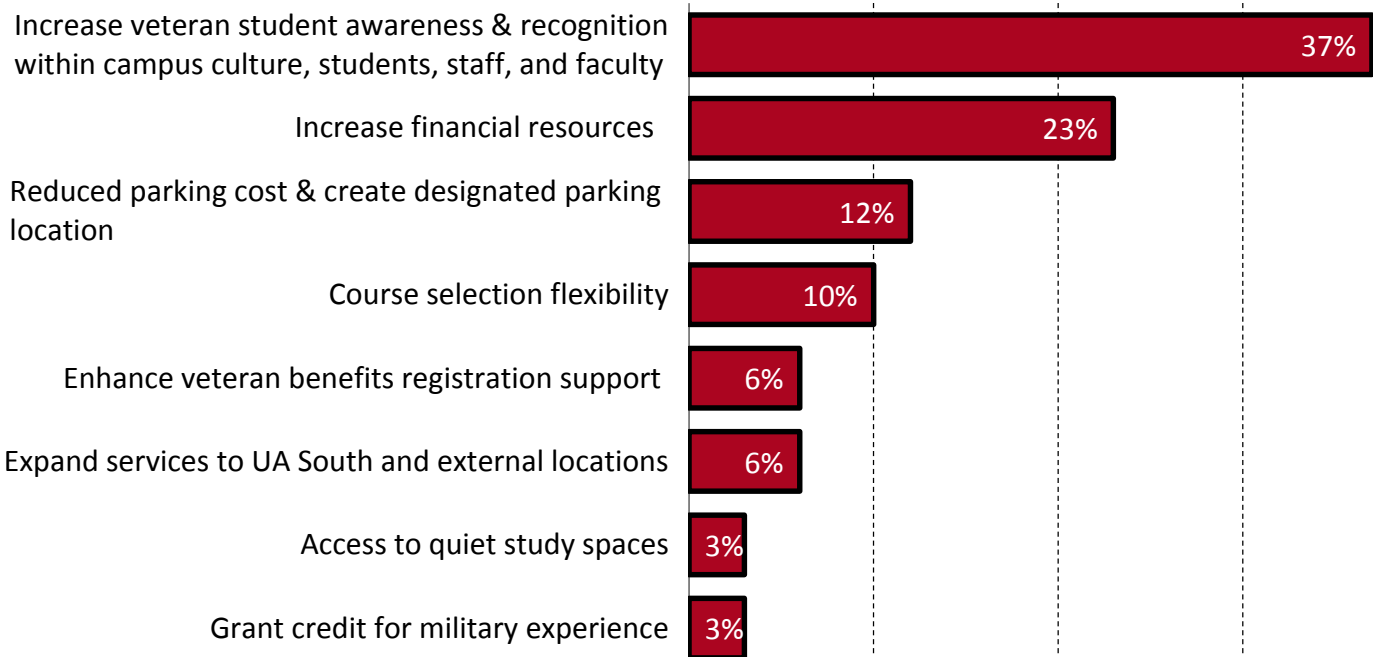


### Top Reasons for Persistence after Withdrawal Consideration\*



## VETERAN STUDENT VOICES

### Recommendations for Change\*



\*Findings interpreted from qualitative analysis of open-ended responses