

Serving Those Who Serve: Veteran Students' Characteristics and Outcomes in the VCCS



Virginia's Community Colleges are dedicated to providing those who serve in the military with opportunities to access the education and training they need to succeed at home. In the 2012-13 academic year, a record-setting 40,827 students with military status enrolled in VCCS colleges, including active duty service members, reservists, retirees, veterans, dependents, and spouses. Although efforts have been made to understand military students in general, little investigation has been done on the unique characteristics of VCCS veteran students.

Study Population

This snapshot focuses on veterans who attended the VCCS between 2008 and 2013. Military status is self-reported on the admissions application. Only those students who identified themselves as veterans at the time of admission are included in this analysis.

Study Population Facts and Outcomes

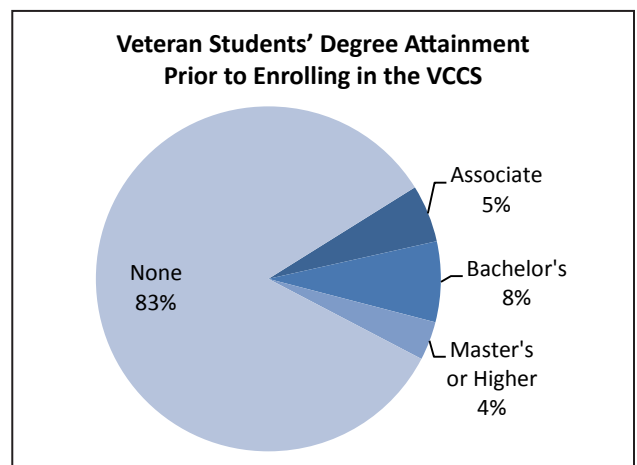
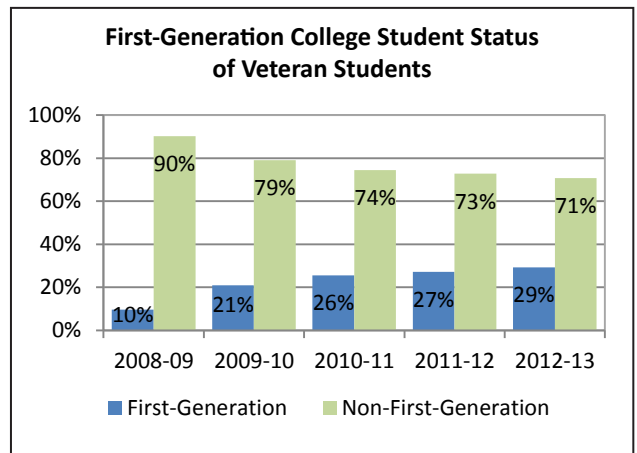
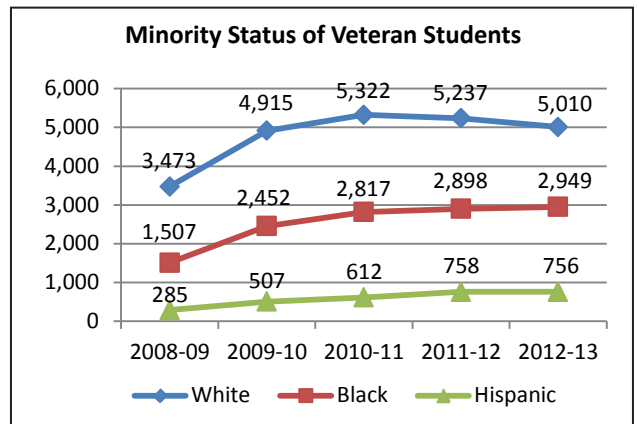
- In 2008-09, 5,703 veteran students attended VCCS colleges; by 2012-13, this number had increased 65% to 9,404.
- In total, 24,132 unduplicated veteran students attended VCCS institutions from 2008-09 to 2012-13.
- Approximately 30% of veteran students were female, compared to 10% of the total U.S. veteran population in 2012.
- In 2008-09, 35% of veteran students were minorities; by 2012-13, this increased to 42% system-wide.
- From 2008-09 to 2012-13, the number of Hispanic and black veteran students grew 165% and 96%, respectively.
- The percentage of veteran students identifying themselves as first-generation college students has increased from 21% in 2009-10 to over 29% in 2012-13.
- Prior to enrolling in the VCCS, a majority of veteran students (83%) had not earned a previous college degree; however, 5% had earned an associate, 8% had earned a bachelor's, and 4% had earned a master's, doctorate, or other professional degree.
- In 2008-09, 498 veterans enrolled in VCCS institutions as first-time-in-college students. By 2012-13, over 18% of these students were VCCS graduates, 29% had transferred to a 4-year institution, and 8% had graduated from a 4-year institution.

Conclusions

Sustained by Post-9/11 GI Bill educational assistance benefits, more veterans are seeking education and career training opportunities at Virginia's Community Colleges. That includes record numbers of women, minority and first-generation students – the very groups that *Achieve 2015* challenges VCCS colleges to attract, serve and graduate. VCCS colleges are better equipped than ever before to help these students succeed. In sharing best practices and leveraging collaborations between our colleges, colleges can assure veteran students have access to the academic counseling and financial aid/GI Bill benefits advising they need to succeed. Colleges can further serve these students through innovative tools like the Virginia Education Wizard's Veteran Career Finder to translate their in-service experience to jobs and careers in high-pay, high-demand fields.

VCCS Veteran Student Headcount Enrollment by Gender

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Male	3,926	5,985	6,620	6,657	6,577
Female	1,777	2,561	2,943	2,925	2,827
Total	5,703	8,546	9,563	9,582	9,404



VCCS VETERAN STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND DEMOGRAPHICS BY YEAR

Institution	Headcount Enrollment by Year					Increase from 2008-09 to 2012-13	2012-13 Demographic Breakdown		
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13		Female	Minority	First-Generation
Blue Ridge	93	149	170	173	164	76%	23%	9%	32%
Central Virginia	175	198	195	155	163	-7%	17%	20%	26%
Dabney S. Lancaster	41	62	53	51	43	5%	14%	16%	30%
Danville	53	87	94	86	85	60%	22%	35%	31%
Eastern Shore	26	32	40	37	42	62%	36%	60%	40%
Germanna	198	308	354	319	319	61%	34%	36%	30%
J. Sargeant Reynolds	326	508	547	533	588	80%	27%	54%	30%
John Tyler	237	391	444	424	408	72%	34%	50%	33%
Lord Fairfax	127	193	195	193	175	38%	27%	17%	32%
Mountain Empire	59	72	78	85	83	41%	14%	11%	47%
New River	135	166	153	154	137	1%	9%	13%	35%
Northern Virginia	1,312	1,902	2,159	2,211	2,260	72%	27%	45%	25%
Patrick Henry	91	127	115	107	129	42%	25%	36%	33%
Paul D. Camp	44	71	86	94	82	86%	34%	59%	45%
Piedmont Virginia	144	151	190	191	185	28%	35%	25%	32%
Rappahannock	63	89	99	86	77	22%	30%	21%	34%
Southside Virginia	107	138	157	143	130	21%	28%	50%	36%
Southwest Virginia	80	105	97	95	69	-14%	13%	6%	38%
Thomas Nelson	569	751	863	905	942	66%	40%	59%	31%
Tidewater	1,432	2,488	2,882	2,979	2,777	94%	35%	55%	28%
Virginia Highlands	52	86	82	80	90	73%	18%	9%	39%
Virginia Western	282	370	398	380	374	33%	16%	26%	30%
Wytheville	57	102	112	101	82	44%	20%	15%	41%
VCCS Total	5,703	8,546	9,563	9,582	9,404	65%	30%	45%	29%

VCCS STUDENTS WITH MILITARY STATUS BY YEAR

Military Status	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Active	2,703	4,733	4,298	4,794	5,111
Dependent	5,981	10,169	12,932	14,589	15,325
Reserve	1,551	3,113	3,591	3,420	3,135
Retired	887	1,874	2,236	2,420	2,229
Spouse	2,067	4,272	5,308	5,720	5,623
Veteran	5,703	8,546	9,563	9,582	9,404
Total Students with Military Status	18,892	32,707	37,928	40,525	40,827
Military Status Students as a Percent of Total VCCS Headcount	7%	12%	14%	14%	15%

How Were Data Generated?

Student and graduate files were used to produce enrollment data. National Student Clearinghouse data were used for 4-year transfer and graduation information.

For More Information

- Visit <http://www.vccs.edu/studentsuccess> to learn more about student success.
- Additional data on veterans from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is available through the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics at: <http://www.va.gov/vetdata/Report.asp>
- The Virginia Education Wizard's Veteran Career Finder is available online at: <https://www.vawizard.org/vccs/Veteran.action>