New Student Checklist
School of General Studies
Fall 2021

✔ Submit a copy of your Certificate of Eligibility or Post 9/11 GI Bill Statement of Benefits to Tessie Scroggins or Chris Connelly.

- Please scan/email it to Tessie Scroggins, ts21@columbia.edu, Chris Connelly, ccc2246@columbia.edu, or gs.veterans@columbia.edu
- If you don’t have this document – go to the VA’s website va.gov and complete the VONAPP. This will prompt the VA to send you your Certificate of Eligibility.
- If you are currently on active duty once you officially separate you must send the Buffalo Regional Office a copy of your DD-214. You can upload your DD-214 via the VA, ask a question link, iris.custhelp.va.gov/app/ask/ At that point, they will switch you from active duty to veteran status and send you a new Certificate of Eligibility.

✔ Complete the Veterans Request for Certification online form on the Columbia Veterans Affairs on the GS website. You will need to complete this form before every term you wish to utilize your VA benefits at Columbia for the following Chapters, 33, 30, and 35.
gs.columbia.edu/content/veterans-request-certification

✔ If you are a transfer student – complete VA Form 22-1995 (Change of Location Form) on the VA’s website:
a.gov/education/apply-for-education-benefits/application/1995/introduction
or here is the PDF: vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-22-1995-ARE.pdf

✔ Notify Tessie Scroggins or Chris Connelly if you will be on Active Duty when you begin the term (even for one day, including terminal leave).

✔ Notify Tessie Scroggins or Chris Connelly if you intend to utilize the Veteran Readiness and Employment services (VR&E) (Chap 31)

- Your benefits will not be pre-certified until after your VR&E Counselor enters an “Authorization” in the VA’s Tungsten system. They should submit two authorizations, one for tuition and fees, and a second one for books and supplies.
- You will also need to submit a copy of your finalized class schedule via email to gs.veterans@columbia.edu
✔ Sign up for Direct Deposit with the VA by calling: 1-888-442-4551 or online: ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/manage/contact

✔ Sign up for VA health coverage by going to Bronx VA or The Harlem Clinic – you have five years after your separation date to do this

  o While you are at the hospital / clinic get your VA ID Card!

✔ Reminder: If you need any dental work – you have 6 months after your separation date to have it covered by VA

✔ Contact for VA Medical insurance questions:
  Lyn Johnson USMC MSW
  VA Outreach Specialist
  Mobile Unit Coordinator
  Minority Veteran Coordinator
  Work Study Supervisor
  VA NY Harbor Healthcare System
  423 East 23rd Street Room 1107-C
  New York, NY 10010
  (212)686-7500 ext 4218 office
  (212)951-3401
  Lyn.Johnson2@va.gov

✔ Visit Office of Disability Services (DS) if needed
  If you have a prior disability, or feel you have a disability and would like a free assessment, please register and submit your paperwork early here. This will initiate the process to obtain necessary assistance for the duration of your time at Columbia. If you have questions, please contact disability@columbia.edu.

✔ Health Services Information (you can opt out of Columbia Health Insurance if you have VA Health Benefits by contacting the Insurance Office.)

✔ Visit CPS Veteran Concerns if needed

✔ Secure housing.

✔ Connect with your GS Veteran Mentor

✔ Reach out to the student community

✔ Follow the newly admitted student portal

✔ Attend both Mandatory Orientation and the GS New Student Veteran Orientation Program:
Veteran and NROTC Orientation Program*
Friday, September 3, 2021, 9 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.
Incoming military veteran and NROTC students will attend a veteran-specific orientation session that will introduce them to the resources available to support their transition into student life at Columbia. This session is required for those veterans utilizing VA Educational Benefits.

Program Agenda
Register

Optional Zoom for remote attendance:
http://columbiauniversity.zoom.us/j/95848548319?pwd=OHVzZzNMvVDesqRXJjNXViWZ1Q2dQQT09
Meeting ID: 958 4854 8319
Passcode: 671037
*Prior to attending the Veteran and NROTC Orientation Program, it is required to log into Courseworks to view the Student Financial Services Video Presentation, Veterans and Families Health and Wellness Resource Packet, and the VA Health Welcome video.

Log in to Courseworks and in your “Courses” drop-down box click on the “School of General Studies New Student Orientation - Fall 2021” course. Scroll down to “Veteran and NROTC Students Orientation Program” to view the mandatory links for student veterans, in addition to general orientation requirements. Here is a list of the mandatory links prior to Veteran and NROTC Orientation Program on Friday.

Student Veteran Educational Financing and Benefits
Student Financial Services Video

Student Veteran Health and Wellness
Columbia University’s Veterans and Families Health and Wellness Resource Packet
VA Health (VHA) Welcome Video

Please also review the following before Orientation:
GS Veteran Educational Financing and Benefits Powerpoint