



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
Veterans Benefits Administration
Education Service
Washington, D.C. 20420

December 4, 2023

Greetings School Leadership,

The administration of GI Bill benefits requires a strong and collaborative relationship between educational institutions, their School Certifying Officials (SCOs), State Approving Agencies (SAAs), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to ensure that GI Bill benefits are delivered properly and timely to students.

After careful deliberation and consideration, VA is recommending a ratio of one full-time SCO to every 125 GI Bill students at an educational institution. For the purposes of this recommendation, a SCO is considered as an employee of an educational institution with the primary responsibility of certifying GI Bill benefits for Veterans, Service members and other VA beneficiaries. The School Certifying Official is often the first and regular touchpoint for this community.

Routinely, Education Service leadership meets with SCOs, school leaders and other stakeholders to discuss how the GI Bill is administered and potential changes to improve the GI Bill student experience. Updating the SCO to GI Bill student ratio has been a frequent topic. Recognizing the updated SCO workload and responsibilities based on recent and pending legislation, this recommended ratio is intended to help SCOs certify GI Bill benefits to students in an effective and timely manner.

As a former college Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, I understand the financial impact that this new ratio may have on budget resources. Yet, the return-on-investment, in additional enrollment and improved retention, is a factor for consideration. More importantly, our Veterans and their families deserve our full support for their commitment and sacrifices associated with military service.

The ratio for SCO support is a recommendation only, and the number of SCOs should be adjusted as appropriate by your educational institution to reflect additional SCO responsibilities beyond certifying GI Bill enrollments, including the administration of other Veteran education programs. Thank you for your continued support of our military and Veteran community in optimizing the use of their GI Bill educational benefits.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph Garcia".

Joseph Garcia
Executive Director, Education Service