

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

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November 8, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Education Study Committee

FR: Adan Delval, LESC Intern

**RE: *WRITTEN REPORT: HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 1, STUDY UNIFORM
MILITARY CREDIT AT NM COLLEGES***

During the 2010 regular legislative session, the Legislature passed House Joint Memorial 1, *Study Uniform Military Credit at NM Colleges*, requesting the Higher Education Department (HED) to conduct a study of the benefits and feasibility of establishing uniform standards for accepting military credit and articulation among all colleges and universities in New Mexico (see Attachment 1).

The department provided the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) with copies of two documents in response to HJM 1:

- a letter from Dr. Viola Florez, Secretary of Higher Education, to Representative Nathan P. Cote, the sponsor of the memorial (see Attachment 2); and
- a copy of a PowerPoint presentation by the State Approving Agencies Director, HED (see Attachment 3).

The letter stated that:

- the US Department of Defense assigns standardized credit to specific training that occurs throughout all military branches and military-offered coursework, which is translated into a college credit “transcript” that can be provided to the institution;
- at this time the study requested in the memorial is not feasible because of two issues:
 - standardization is difficult because each major and academic program must abide by separate accreditation standards. Acceptance of military credit can often be on a case-by-case basis, and it differs from program to program. For this reason, the Secretary stated, it may not be feasible to require schools to adhere to such standards; and
 - HJM 1 has administrative implications for HED, which does not currently have the staffing capacity without additional funding to administer such an extensive study. Such a study would have to examine the feasibility of standardizing the acceptance of a myriad of military credit coursework among the numerous accredited degree options available to students throughout New Mexico’s public postsecondary institutions.
- even so, 15 New Mexico postsecondary institutions are members of the Service Members Opportunity Consortium, which adheres to the American Council on Education’s standard reference guide to evaluating educational experience from the military; and
- however, the Secretary of Higher Education states that HED can encourage higher education institutions to follow these guidelines and work to develop better access, in general, to all the resources available to veterans;

The PowerPoint presentation states:

- every institution of higher education in New Mexico has approved programs that veterans may participate in and use their GI benefits, and they are required to ensure that the veterans are taking courses that will lead to the completion of a degree; and
- the majority of lower division courses in New Mexico are transferable among state institutions, with the exception of New Mexico Tech and Luna Community College.



The Legislature
of the
State of New Mexico

49th Legislature, 2nd Session

LAWS 2010

CHAPTER _____

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 1

Introduced by

REPRESENTATIVE NATHAN P. COTE

REPRESENTATIVE JAMES P. WHITE
REPRESENTATIVE DANICE PICRAUX
SENATOR MARY JANE GARCIA



FOR THE MILITARY AND VETERANS'
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

1 A JOINT MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO STUDY THE
3 BENEFITS AND FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING UNIFORM STANDARDS FOR
4 ACCEPTING MILITARY CREDIT AND ARTICULATION AMONG ALL COLLEGES
5 AND UNIVERSITIES IN NEW MEXICO.

6
7 WHEREAS, the legislature has the goal of providing
8 educational opportunities for all members of the United States
9 armed forces; and

10 WHEREAS, New Mexico has a history of educating active
11 duty military and civilian leaders; and

12 WHEREAS, the legislature is committed to lifelong
13 learning for military personnel and helps with tuition costs;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, servicemembers who frequently move from place
16 to place have trouble completing college degrees; and

17 WHEREAS, military-friendly institutions that have
18 flexible policies can assist mobile servicemembers and their
19 families to complete degrees rather than just accumulate
20 course credits; and

21 WHEREAS, articulation agreements facilitate the easy
22 transfer of credits from one educational institution to
23 another; and

24 WHEREAS, the servicemembers opportunity colleges
25 consortium facilitates the acceptance of military credit and

1 articulation in cooperation with fifteen higher education
2 associations, the department of defense and active and reserve
3 components of the military services; and

4 WHEREAS, fifteen colleges and universities in New
5 Mexico, including the university of New Mexico and New Mexico
6 state university, are servicemembers opportunity colleges
7 consortium member institutions; and

8 WHEREAS, for more than a half century, the American
9 council on education's guide to the evaluation of educational
10 experiences in the armed services has been the standard
11 reference work for recognizing learning acquired in the
12 military; and

13 WHEREAS, currently, approximately one thousand eight
14 hundred appropriately accredited colleges and universities
15 recognize and use that guide in evaluating and awarding
16 academic credit for military training and experience and
17 provide associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees for
18 servicemembers and their adult dependent family members;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
20 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the higher education department be
21 requested to study the benefits and feasibility of
22 establishing uniform standards for accepting military credit
23 and articulation among all colleges and universities in New
24 Mexico and present its findings to the appropriate interim
25 committee of the legislature by November 2010; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of higher education and the governor.



BEN LUJAN, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



STEPHEN R. ARIAS, CHIEF CLERK
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



DIANE D. DENISH, PRESIDENT
SENATE



LENORE M. NARANJO, CHIEF CLERK
SENATE

SECRETARY OF STATE
OFFICE OF

10/28/08 - 2 PM 3:14

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ATTACHMENT 2

Representative Nathan Cote
15475 Space Murals
Las Cruces, NM 88011

Representative Cote,

House Joint Memorial 1 (HJM1) requests the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) to study the benefits and feasibility of establishing uniform standards for accepting military credit and articulation among all colleges and universities in New Mexico.

Military credit is essentially credit that recognizes the military serviceman or veteran's experience and training while serving in the military. The Department of Defense assigns a standardized credit to specific training that occurs throughout all military branches and military-offered coursework. This work is translated into a college credit "transcript," which can be provided to the institution. This memorial is requesting a uniform standard for accepting such credit among our state institutions.

There are two issues with the passing of this bill:

- 1) Standardization is difficult because each major and academic program has separate accreditation standards by which they must abide. For example, the coursework requirements and acceptance of credits for an accredited art major is going to differ dramatically from a highly accredited engineering program. Acceptance of military credit can often be on a case-by-case basis and differ from program to program. For this reason, it may not be feasible to require schools to adhere to such standards.
- 2) HJM1 has administrative implications for NMHED. The Department does not currently have the staffing capacity (without funding) to administer such an extensive study that would have to look at the feasibility of standardizing the acceptance of a myriad of military credit coursework among the numerous accredited degree options available to students throughout our New Mexico public postsecondary institutions.

Though the support of our veterans is crucial and this is an important issue, currently 15 New Mexico postsecondary institutions are members of the Service Members Opportunity Consortium, which adheres to following the American Council on Education's standard reference guide to evaluating educational experience from the military. NMHED can certainly encourage our institutions to follow these guidelines and work to develop better access, in general, to all the resources available to our veterans, but at this time such a study is not feasible.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Government Affairs Coordinator, Brandon Trujillo at 505-328-1138 or Brandon.trujillo@state.nm.us.

Sincerely,

Vi Florez
Cabinet Secretary

Cc: Paula Tackett, Director, Legislative Council Service

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SANTA FE, NM 87505-2100
Phone: 505.476.8400
www.hed.state.nm.us



New Mexico Higher Education Department

PRESENTERS:

Vi Florez, Cabinet Secretary, NMHED

Brandon Trujillo, SAA Director, NMHED

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 1

HJM 1	NMHED Response
<p>Military Friendly Institutions that have flexible policies can assist mobile service members and their families to complete degrees rather than just accumulate course credits.</p>	<p>Every Institution of Higher Education in New Mexico has approved programs that veterans may participate in and use their GI Benefits. As an institution with an approved program, they are required to ensure that the veterans are taking courses that will lead to the completion of a degree.</p>
<p>Articulation agreements facilitate the easy transfer of credits from one educational institution to another.</p>	<p>HED currently facilitates the New Mexico Articulation Task Force. The majority of lower division courses in New Mexico are transferable between NM Institutions of Higher Education.</p>
<p>Service members opportunity colleges consortium facilitates the acceptance of military credit and articulation.</p>	<p>All Public Institutions of Higher Education are members except: New Mexico Tech and Luna Community College</p>
<p>Currently 1,800 appropriately accredited colleges and universities recognize and use the American Council on Education's guide to the evaluation of educational experiences in the armed services.</p>	<p>Every Public Institution of Higher Education has a certifying official and every certifying official receives this document. It is recommended that the Institutions consult the organizations listed on the document when reviewing prior credit.</p>

Prior Credit

The ACE Military Guide

The ACE Military Guide (Guide to Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services) is on the web at: www.militaryguides.acenet.edu

Transcripts

ARMY

The website to obtain Army transcripts is: <http://aarts.army.mil>

AARTS Transcripts

NAVY & MARINES

The website to obtain Navy transcripts is: <https://smart.navy.mil>

SMART Transcripts

COAST GUARD

The website to obtain Coast Guard transcripts is: www.uscg.mil/hq/cgi/ve/official_transcript.asp

CGI Transcripts

AIR FORCE

The website to obtain Air Force transcripts is: www.au.af.mil/au/ccaf/transcripts.asp

CCAF Transcripts

Every Institution is provided with this information

New Mexico State Approving Agency

As of February 19, 2010, the New Mexico Higher Education Department officially received the contract from the Federal Department of Veteran Affairs. It was formally contracted with Veteran Services. There was continued dialog between the Higher Education Department and Veteran Services on whether or not the SAA should be housed at HED. Since HED has oversight and statutory authority over public and Institutions of Higher Education in the state and the majority of SAA's are housed in higher education state entities across the country, it was determined HED was the appropriate organization for the SAA