SERVICEMEMBERS OPPORTUNITY COLLEGES
DEGREE NETWORK SYSTEM

SOC FAQS FOR STUDENTS

What is a SOC DNS Student Agreement, and what will it do for me?

A SOC DNS Student Agreement is a document that your home college must provide to you upon completion of your first six credits of coursework. The home college is the school where you intend to complete your degree. This is different than another school that you might be attending for courses to transfer back to the school where you will complete your degree. The Student Agreement will serve as your degree plan as well as a contract-for-degree between you and your home college that will protect you from any degree requirement changes. It will list all of the courses required for your degree, as well as any credit you may have been awarded for military training experience, testing programs, or any previously completed college courses. The Student Agreement will remain in effect while you are deployed, if you transfer duty stations, and after you leave the service.

Do SOC DNS member schools make allowances for military deployments and other operational commitments?

SOC DNS member institutions, as signatories of the Department of Defense Memorandum of Understanding, agree to abide by the U. S. Department of Education's Readmission Policy for military servicemembers and the *Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students (HEROES) Act of 2003*. These, and other legislation, serve to protect military students whose studies are interrupted by military commitments (e.g., withdrawal and reimbursement of tuition payments, deferment on student loans, and returning to school after a disruption because of military service).

Contact your Education Services Officer or Financial Aid Counselor if you need assistance or have questions concerning these policies. You can read these Acts in their entirety at **https://congress.gov/**.

Please note this protection is extended to active duty members of the Armed Forces, reserve, and National Guard called to active duty under federal authority.

What type of delivery methods do SOC DNS schools use for classes?

SOC DNS schools offer many types of delivery methods for course completion to provide flexibility for servicemembers. These methods include traditional courses offered in brick and mortar classrooms, distance learning, DVD, thumb-drive or other electronic storage, and prior learning assessment. Students should choose a school that offers a delivery method that will help them be successful in their academic program. Many SOC DNS schools also offer courses at or near military bases. **See Chapter 4** of the *SOC DNS Handbooks* for a state-by-state listing of military installations and the schools offering programs there.

Will my credits transfer?

A key feature of SOC DNS member schools is that they have agreed to accept at least 40% of the major or major-related coursework for students transferring between SOC DNS member institutions in similar

degree programs. This Guaranteed Transferability is in addition to the acceptance of military transfer credit recommendations and those recommended for nationally recognized testing programs. These transfer policies are meant to provide military students with flexibility, choices, and multiple ways of earning credits. You should always consult with your Education Service Officer and the advisement office of your home college prior to transferring schools, changing majors, or taking courses from another school.

What is academic residency?

Academic residency is the percentage of the degree (number of credits) that a student must complete at that school in order to be awarded a degree. Generally, an associate degree is 60 credits, 25% residency for an associate degree means the student must complete 15 of the 60 credits by taking courses at the home college. Similarly, a bachelor's degree is normally 120 credits, 30 credits completed at that school will constitute 25% residency.

What happens if I deploy or other military obligations prevent me from completing a course on time?

If you cannot complete a test or other course requirements on time, there are 4 entities that you need to inform:

1. First contact the faculty member teaching the course to see if there is a way you can postpone or make up the work.

2. Notify your home college registrar's office. Every school has a formal withdrawal policy that you must follow. Have a copy of your orders ready for submission.

3. Speak with your education center to discuss necessary action regarding your Tuition Assistance.

4. Advise all holders of your student loans as soon as possible. Loan holders are required by the HEROES Act to provide you with some level of relief, such as deferment or forbearance.