



Building METC Degree Bridge Partnerships in Michigan

Michigan Center for Student Success

Fall 2019

Colleges and universities have awarded college credit for military training and education since 1945 when the Department of Defense (DoD) contracted with the [American Council on Education \(ACE\)](#) to begin reviewing military training and recommending academic credit for prior learning on military transcripts. Today, thousands of ACE credit recommendations have been evaluated for comparable academic credit, several states have legislative policy requiring institutions to accept ACE credit recommendations, and all military service branches are becoming more strategic about ensuring a clear pathway between military and civilian education and career training. One such innovative method comes from the military Medical Education and Training Campus (METC). This brief describes approaches used at METC to ensure their training aligns with academic programs and civilian credentials toward servicemembers' continuing employment following their military service. In addition, lessons learned from Michigan colleges and universities that recently created new METC degree bridge partnerships are provided to encourage more postsecondary institutions to serve veterans with streamlined, articulated academic pathways.

BRIEF HISTORY OF METC

The decision to consolidate the majority of medical training for all enlisted personnel in every service branch at a co-located facility on Fort Sam Houston, TX was made in 2005. METC officially opened in 2011 as a state-of-the-art training center for Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard medics, corpsmen, and technicians. METC is the [world's largest enlisted medical education campus](#) and largest consolidation of military training in DoD history. Today, METC [operates nearly 50 training programs](#), many of which are programmatically accredited by the same external agencies as higher education partners.

METC Higher Education Affiliates and Degree Bridge Partners

While many of METC's healthcare training programs are programmatically accredited, METC is not recognized as a regionally accredited, degree-granting institution of higher learning. To ensure servicemembers and veterans can apply their significant training toward academic degree requirements, METC has partnered with

colleges and universities across the country in various ways over the years. An affiliation exists with the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) and METC is also an independent branch campus of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS). More recently, METC began formally recognizing degree bridge partner institutions that commit to articulating credit for METC training and accelerating academic degree completion options for eligible veterans.

“ASIDE FROM ENHANCING THE COLLEGE’S ABILITY TO SERVE CURRENT AND FORMER SERVICE MEMBERS, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT VALUE FROM WORKING ON THIS PROJECT CAME FROM AN EXAMINATION OF HOW EXTERNAL NON-CREDIT TRAINING AND INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS CAN BE UTILIZED TO TRANSCRIPT EXPERIENTIAL CREDIT FOR A SPECIFIC PROGRAM.”

– GLEN OAKS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Determining Your Institution's Fit for a METC Degree Bridge


Before jumping into the degree bridge partnership process, colleges and universities should consider their contextual environment and explore potential matches between METC programs and their own catalogs. The METC catalog is available online¹ at www.metc.mil. Questions for the campus to consider in determining fit for METC degree bridging include:

What is veteran enrollment in healthcare programs?

What is faculty appetite for awarding credit for prior learning?

Are there champions on the campus to progress the work?

Are there resources to support the project, including travel to METC, ongoing commitment to curricular alignment procedures, and marketing the programs?



“DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR THINGS. THERE WERE TIMES DURING THIS WORK THAT WE WOULD THINK 'WE PROBABLY CANNOT DO THIS OR THAT' AND THEN WE WOULD ASK AND THE COLLEGE WOULD MAKE IT HAPPEN.”

— LANSING COMMUNITY COLLEGE

METC Process for Approving Degree Bridge Partnerships

Campuses should further consider the process that METC has delineated for approving new degree bridge partnerships in the action steps identified below:

1. Express interest in partnership via email or phone with METC staff.
2. Schedule and complete METC tour of programs of interest (5 max).
3. Request curriculum plans (CPs) for programs that seem to be compatible to your catalog.
4. Have CPs evaluated by faculty and staff on your campus to begin drafting a proposed Notice of Transfer Credit (See Appendix A) in consultation with METC staff.
5. Send draft proposal(s) to METC staff.
6. METC Program Directors review proposals and provide feedback as needed.
7. METC responds with approval or feedback for further edits before approval.
8. Once approved, an agreement is established between the institution and METC and the new program is placed in [METC's online listing](#). In addition, colleges and universities should make information about these programs available to the public. Lansing Community College provides a [good example](#) demonstrating their radiologic technologist METC bridge program.

¹You may receive a message indicating an unsecure site; there is no risk in overriding the error to navigate the site.

BUILDING NEW DEGREE BRIDGES IN MICHIGAN

In 2017-2018, the Michigan Center for Student Success received a \$46,000 grant from the Midwestern Higher Education Compact (MHEC) to continue its focus on student success for veterans and military connected students. Throughout 2018, MCSS invited institutions to build new accelerated degree completion pathways for veterans in healthcare through its Medical Education and Training Campus (METC) Degree Bridge Partners project. In total, five community colleges and one university completed the project, creating more than twenty new accelerated degree completion bridge programs for veterans in 2019. Figure 1 displays the institutions and degree bridges created as a result of this project.

Figure 1: New METC Degree Bridges Built in 2019

Institution	Programs Created
Eastern Michigan University	Medical Logistics to BS in Health Administration
	Healthcare Admin Specialist to BS in Health Administration
Glen Oaks Community College	Healthcare Admin Specialist to AAS Allied Health
	Healthcare Admin Specialist to Medical Administrative Specialist Certificate
Kirtland Community College	Hospital Corpsman Basic – AAS Medical Assistant
	Health Care Administration Specialist – AAS Health Information Technology
	Health Care Administrative Specialist – AAS Medical Assistant
	Diagnostic Medical Sonographer – AAS Cardiac Sonography
	Health Care Specialist/Combat Medic – AAS Medical Assistant
	Aerospace Medical Service Apprentice – AAS Emergency Medical Services (Paramedic)
	Health Care Specialist/Combat Medic – AAS Emergency Medical Services (Paramedic)
	Aerospace Medical Service Apprentice – AAS Medical Assistant
	Cardiopulmonary Laboratory Apprentice – AAS Cardiac Sonography
Lansing Community College	Radiologic Technologist to AAS, Allied Health
Mott Community College	Air Force, Army, and Navy Dental Assistant to CODA Accredited Dental Assistant Certificate
Schoolcraft College	Healthcare Admin Specialist to Health Informational Technology AAS
	Pharmacy Technician to Pharmacy Technician Skills Certificate CRT
	Pharmacy Technician to Pharmacy Technician Certificate 1YC
	Pharmacy Technician to Health Professionals Management AAS

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

In reflecting on their participation in this project, the institutions shared their lessons learned.

Inter-Departmental Work

Each campus team included academic affairs administrators, faculty and staff from within appropriate academic departments and program units, and transfer credit specialists, usually from the registrar's office. In addition, several teams included military specialists, either staff that directly serve veterans on campus or special project consultants that were brought on to help with military jargon translation. As part of this interdepartmental work, all units had to agree on the value of undertaking the tedious work required to create these articulations. This is particularly important because of the constantly swirling competing priorities in higher education that can make even important work like this end up at the bottom of the priority list. Several participating institutions noted the excitement and commitment to building awareness for better-serving veterans as well as the opportunity for dedicated interdepartmental learning on how non-credit training and industry credentials can be articulated into like academic programs.

Articulation Challenges

Challenges articulating non-credit training to academic programs was noted by all participants as a point of growth. The institutions chronicled their learning about military training, indicating that it is both highly structured and well-documented but also occasionally too narrowly focused given the military training mission versus the wider breadth of civilian training programs. The campuses noted working through skill development inquiries and matching contact hours to ensure all training components were covered in

order to award appropriate credit. Several areas of discovery were noted for future exploration, including: portfolio work that might help bridge the gap where full articulation could not be achieved; opportunities to articulate general education competencies to further shorten the pathway to degrees; interest in looking outside of METC training programs to create articulated pathways for veterans outside of healthcare; and engaging in collaborative work with peer institutions to serve veterans in potentially low enrollment program areas.

“THE PROCESS OF EVALUATING CURRICULUM AND MATCHING IT TO THE COLLEGE’S OFFERINGS IN AN ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY LIKENESSES CREATED A DEEP OPPORTUNITY FOR LEARNING. A SURPRISE VALUE OBTAINED WAS INSIGHT INTO THE DIFFERENCES ON TIME ALLOCATION FOR STUDENTS TO PROGRESS THROUGH PARTICULAR OBJECTIVES AND SKILLS.”

– SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE

Marketing Matters

The campuses all discussed wanting to better market to military-connected students. Readily available data from the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs are rightly protected for servicemembers' privacy, and other legal concerns prohibit certain relationship building tactics between postsecondary institutions and these federal agencies. Having something tangible to market, an accelerated degree completion program in this case, was appealing to facilitating clear, direct communications with both military educators and veteran healthcare specialists.

PURSuing THE MISSION ON YOUR CAMPUS

Colleges and universities interested in taking their service of student veterans to the next level in curating streamlined degree completion pathways are encouraged to reach out to METC's Office of Strategic Planning and Partnerships at (210) 808-1228 to initiate their METC Degree Bridge Partnership.

A NOTE FROM METC

IT WAS INDEED NOTEWORTHY HAVING WITNESSED AND FELT THE SHARED ENTHUSIASM AND PASSION OF THE VARIOUS COLLEGIATE TEAMS THAT PARTICIPATED. DESPITE UNFAMILIARITY WITH OUR BRIDGING AND PARTNERING PROCESS, THE TEAMS FORGED FORWARD BY USING OUR SYSTEM TOOLS, ASKING QUESTIONS ALONG THE WAY, SEEKING CLARITY DURING POINTS OF UNCERTAINTY, AND RELYING ON THE COLLECTIVE PROJECT TEAM FOR KNOWLEDGE SHARING. THIS PROJECT HAS PAVED THE WAY FOR POTENTIALLY NUMEROUS OTHERS THAT WILL FOLLOW. THE GROWING AND COLLECTIVE IMPACT OF THESE BRIDGE PATHWAYS WILL MAKE A PROFOUND DIFFERENCE IN IMPROVING THE LIVES OF VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM ACROSS OUR COUNTRY. TO EVERYONE INVOLVED, WE EXTEND OUR RESPECT AND THANKS!

MR. BARRY S. MOORE

DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS



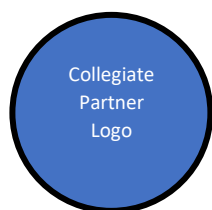
MR. R. KEITH HALL

PROGRAM MANAGER, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PARTNERSHIPS

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Appendix A Notice of Transfer Credit Template



Notice of Transfer Credit for Medical Education and Training Campus Instructional Cadre and Alumni



Healthcare Specialist – BS in Healthcare Management (*online and on campus*)

Prosperity College of Excellence
8629 Excellence Circle
New Hope, Vision 99929

Advisor – Healthcare Management Programs
1 (372) 498-6636
<https://www.prosperity-ce.com>

Service Course Number(s): 300-68W10

Course Start Dates for Credits Granted (Curriculum Effective Date through 2 Years beyond Effective Date of This Document): June 29, 2016 until December 20, 2020

Lower Level Credits Granted: Military Science (2 hrs); Basic First Aid (1 hr); Intro to Emergency Medicine (3 hrs); Emergency Medical Treatment (3 hrs); Principles of Wound Care (3 hrs); Medical Triage Procedures (2 hrs); Medical Terminology (3 hrs); Anatomy and Physiology (3 hrs); Basic Life Support (2 hrs); Basic Nursing Care (3 hrs)

Upper Level Credit Granted: Principle of Ambulatory Care (3 hrs); Patient Transport Procedures (3 hrs)

Total Transfer Credits Granted: 31 credit hours

Mandatory Courses Required to Graduate: 9 including Quality Assurance Risk Management (3 hrs) Fundamentals of Management (3 hrs); Fundamental of Leaderships (3 hrs); Fundamentals of Finance (3 hrs); Fundamental of Accounting (3 hrs); Ethics in Health Care Management (3 hrs); Health Care Marketing and Strategic Planning (3 hrs); Cultural Competence in Health Care (3 hrs); and Legal Aspects of Health Care Management (3 hrs)

Maximum Number of Transfer Credits Accepted Per Institutional Policy: 90

Will Consider Other Military Courses for Credits: Yes, via Joint Service Transcript, ACE Recommendations, Official Course Descriptions from ATTRS along with Graduation Certificate

Will Consider Credits from Other Institutions: Yes, via colleges and universities that were accredited during tenure as a student; technical schools and trade schools with published catalogs containing official course descriptions, course length, testing methods, and passing criteria

Medical or Supervisory Courses for Which Credits Can Be Awarded from Competency Based Assessment? Not at this time; expected in July 2020

Can courses be taken any semester or term, or are enrollees required to start and finish mandatory courses during a given period or track i.e. annual start date? Students can enroll or start any semester.

Effective Date: December 20, 2018

**MICHIGAN CENTER
FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**

MICHIGAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSOCIATION

