

5-2021

## INTO THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM, ANOTHER TOUR OF DUTY: A GUIDE FOR INSTRUCTORS OF VETERAN STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Steven deWalden

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Higher Education and Teaching Commons](#), [Organizational Communication Commons](#), and the [Other Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

deWalden, Steven, "INTO THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM, ANOTHER TOUR OF DUTY: A GUIDE FOR INSTRUCTORS OF VETERAN STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION" (2021). *Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations*. 1213.

<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/etd/1213>

This Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Graduate Studies at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses, Projects, and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@csusb.edu](mailto:scholarworks@csusb.edu).

INTO THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM, ANOTHER TOUR OF DUTY: A GUIDE  
FOR INSTRUCTORS OF VETERAN STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

---

A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
in  
Communication Studies

---

by  
Steven Robert deWalden

May 2021

INTO THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM, ANOTHER TOUR OF DUTY: A GUIDE  
FOR INSTRUCTORS OF VETERAN STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

---

A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

---

by  
Steven Robert deWalden

May 2021

Approved by:

Julie Taylor, Committee Chair, Communication Studies

Brian Heisterkamp, Committee Member

Donna Gotch, Committee Member

© 2021 Steven Robert deWalden

## ABSTRACT

Concepts found in organizational socialization and culturally responsive pedagogy, were used in this project. The focus was on the veteran population who are leaving the unique organizations of the military to transition into higher education. Differences in socialization techniques used by the military and higher education are vastly different and contribute to unique outcomes for the new members. In this project, veterans were represented as a unique culture to consider in the classrooms of higher education as instructors prepare to use a culturally responsive approach to teaching. This project was created using an autoethnographic process using self-reflection through a narrative lens. The process was an iterative task used to identify elements to include in the guidebook. Academic databases were used to identify extant studies related to veterans transitioning to higher education. Findings in the existing literature were used as reflections to journal my own lived experiences. Beneficial data was collected and used to create a guidebook of best practices for instructors of veterans in higher education. The project was designed to contribute to the existing literature surrounding veterans in higher education, by providing a resource designed for use in college classrooms with veteran students. Suggestions for implementation were provided.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge a few of the people who have been my sources of motivation, determination, and commitment to continue my educational journey. Thank you all for your constant support. A big part of who I am today is because of the impact each of you have made on my journey.

**Monica, Madison, and Ethan**, my world, my life, my family, my everything. Thank you for the sacrifices that you have made. The support that you have all provided me as I have selfishly continued toward a personal goal of furthering my education has not been taken for granted. I was not the only person to sacrifice during this journey, but I had a choice, and you did not. I understand that I have missed moments that we will never get back, but your support has helped me become a better version of myself. I am truly thankful for each of you. I love you with every breath I take, and look forward to more quality time together.

**Dr. Julie Taylor**, my committee chair, mentor, and the epitome of what a professor could be. You have been instrumental in my success in the graduate program. Your guidance, advice, and encouragement has been consistently positive. I appreciate how you have allowed my project to develop as I intended while guiding me through moments of misdirection. I am a better communication scholar because of your efforts. Thank you!

**Dr. Brian Heisterkamp**, my committee member and the first professor to challenge me to be a critical thinker. You have been a gracious advisor along the

way. I appreciate the introduction to culturally responsive pedagogy as a concept to consider for this project. Your wisdom and demeanor were valuable in helping me to relax and enjoy the process of putting the project together. Thank you!

**Professor Donna Gotch**, my committee chair, my mentor, my advisor, my reason for first finding higher education as the place I was supposed to be. Your approach to teaching is unique, challenging, and encourages self-reflection and critical thinking. Your contribution to my motivation to succeed as a student is immeasurable. I will forever hold you as an example of how I want to impact students positively. It is the way that you brought me into the classroom as a member who can contribute to the class that has pushed me towards doing this project. Thank you!

## DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the Veterans of America that did not make it home from combat. I will make the most out of this life because you paid the ultimate price for me to have the ability to do so. Thank you all.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
From Military into Higher Education .....	1
Veteran College Students .....	5
CHAPTER TWO: A LOOK AT THE SENSITIZING CONCEPTS USED.....	14
Organizational Socialization and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.....	14
Organizational Socialization .....	14
Organizational Socialization in Context.....	25
Military.....	25
Higher Education.....	26
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy .....	29
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....	39
Why a Methodology Section for a Project?.....	39
Researcher Position.....	39
Method .....	41
Ethical Considerations .....	43
Data Collection and Interpretation.....	44
Future Plans.....	46
CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION .....	48
APPENDIX A: OUT OF THE MILITARY, INTO THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM:	

A GUIDEBOOK FOR INSTRUCTORS OF VETERAN STUDENTS  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION..... 50

REFERENCES.....103

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Summary Description of Socialization Tactics.....17

Table 1.2. *Summary Description of Assimilation Phases of Socialization Process*  
.....20

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### From Military into Higher Education

September 11, 2001, forever changed the lives of many people. For many, that was the day they decided to enlist into the military and serve the United States of America. No one knew that was also the day that would propel the nation into the longest two conflicts of our history. For veterans who had already enlisted and were currently serving, this date changed their intended expectations of military service. Serving in the military from that date forward would be a unique experience, compared to all prior servicemembers since World War II. This new era of military veteran would be required to deploy to combat zones more frequently due to the smaller numbers of our all-volunteer force. Smaller numbers of personnel available, and greater numbers of personnel needed to deploy, means more deployment rotations for the military members who served during the most recent wars of Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom [OEF] (Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on the Initial Assessment of Readjustment Needs of Military Personnel, Veterans, and Their Families, 2010). Essentially, veterans of this era are beginning to transition out of the military. Each veteran will transition for their own reason. For some, they have served twenty or more years and are eligible to retire, others may have injuries preventing further service, and others will simply decide to not re-enlist. Regardless of the reason for the transition, the experiences of each veteran will

contribute unique perspectives that deserve to be understood. Important for the context of this project, there are more veterans transitioning into higher education due to increased benefits of serving in the military including the benefit of the post 9/11 GI Bill (Veterans – *PNPI*, n.d.). Thus, it is important for higher education institutions to work toward understanding the perspectives of veterans in order to help this demographic be successful in the college classroom. For this project, I created a guidebook to help instructors gain a better perspective of veteran students by completing the following: researching existing studies in organizational socialization phases; processes; outcomes; culturally responsive pedagogy; and by reflecting on my personal experiences to compare the findings in the research to my experience as a member of this demographic.

As veterans transition from the rigid structural environment of the military into higher education, the processes of assimilation might look or feel different to them. For instance, scholars who study organizational socialization contend that socialization processes are based on organizational goals (Cable et al. 2013; Howe & Hinderaker, 2018). For the context of this project, the organizational goals of the military and higher education are disparate and thus socialization processes happen in very distinct ways. More specifically, military socialization is often centered on sameness and working together for life and death purposes; whereas, higher education is trying to create critical and independent thinkers. The way those processes materialize and are experienced are the impetus for this project. Instructors in higher education serve as important pieces in the

puzzle of an already often present institutional mission of encouraging veteran success. In other words, on campus resources such as Veteran's Success Centers operate on a macro-level, and this project is focused on the micro-level processes for veteran's success through instructor communication behaviors. As an important step, instructors should understand the structural differences between the military and higher education in socialization processes, and how they can be experienced in different ways during transition from military to higher education. In this project, the veteran population is characterized as a culture in order to contextualize and provide pedagogical strategies.

As instructors in higher education develop professionally, each will learn new approaches and techniques of teaching. Gay (2002) defined the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy to incorporate and consider the cultural experiences of students to teach students more effectively. Instructors in higher education are in the most advantageous position to impact veteran college students. As instructors serve as the variable who contributes most to the classroom climate (Simonds & Cooper, 2011), an understanding of the concepts in culturally responsive teaching can help make this contribution more positive. Abacioglu et al. (2020) stated, instructors can build on effective teacher qualities by incorporating knowledge gained from student's lived experiences and unique perspectives. In this case, acknowledging the uniqueness of veteran's lived experiences into a new reality for veterans and organizational structure of higher education.

Imperative to the credibility of the project is the fact that I am a combat veteran of the most recent wars of OIF and OEF, and a current graduate student. I feel this project is a significant contribution to both higher education faculty, and veteran college students who have recently or are currently transitioning from the military. It is evident that veterans are a group of college students who have been a focus of both federal and college-specific initiatives designed to help them be successful in higher education. These initiatives include such processes as: The Post 9/11 Veteran's Educational Assistance Act (GI Bill) passed in 2008 (Veterans – *PNPI*, n.d.), college campus veteran's resource centers, staff in higher education administrative positions who explicitly focus on providing enrollment, registration, and recruitment efforts towards veterans, and the improvements being seen in the management of the VA. These programs show positive steps being taken to help veterans make this transition successfully. Nevertheless, the common theme found in research thus far is a macro-level focus on what challenges veterans face in college (e.g., Ackerman et al., 2009; Blackwell- Starnes, 2018; Dillard & Yu, 2016; Kirchner, 2015; O'Herrin, 2011). This project extends the conversation of addressing challenges faced by veterans in higher education, by considering the experience of a veteran in the classroom and how instructors can approach this student demographic.

I argue that the positive steps that have been taken to help veterans' transition into higher education have stopped at the doorways of college classrooms. Using my experience as a veteran student, the guidebook is

intended to be a foundational and informational guide for instructors of veteran students in higher education to use as a resource to better understanding veteran students. Using the perspectives offered in organizational socialization processes and outcomes, and the approach of culturally responsive teaching to guide my contributions to a best-practices guide that can serve as a malleable beginning to most effectively considering the student veterans' transition experience from military to higher education. In the following pages, I discuss current research and how it was used to guide my project.

### Veteran College Students

This project is focused on the specific demographic of veteran students. To clarify the term veteran student in this project, I will first use the Veteran Administration's (VA) definition of veteran as "a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable" (38 U.S. Code § 101 – Definitions. n.d). Notably, there are eight types of discharge conditions that a veteran may receive based on the circumstances that lead to the discharge: 1.) honorable, 2.) general under honorable, 3.) other than honorable, 4.) bad conduct, 5.) dishonorable, 6.) medical separation, 7.) early entry separation, and 8.) convenience of the government separation (Wallace, 2019). The past tense use of the verb "served," means that current active-duty military members are not considered veterans. The requirement of having served in the "active military," means the reserve component of the military (reservist) does not count as active-

duty service. Therefore, a reservist does not meet the VA's definition of veteran unless the reserve military member was initiated into active-duty status temporarily as might occasionally happen, especially during times of conflict. The last requirement is being "discharged" from active duty under conditions that are not classified as dishonorable (Hodges, 2018). For this project the term "student" will refer to people who are enrolled in higher education in pursuit of a certificate or degree. Collectively then, a veteran student is a person who fits into both aforementioned categories.

The experiences of each veteran are unique. Veterans may share some commonalities such as: duty station, occupation, deployments, and leadership experience. In this context, leadership experience represents not only the leadership that a veteran was exposed to by others, but also leadership roles that the veteran did or did not have. The one thing every veteran has in common is the fact that their time in service will come to an end. For the fortunate ones, that means they can transition back to the civilian life they left behind. With the introduction of the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 (Post 9/11 GI Bill), which provides increased benefits for veterans to attend higher education, the immediate financial decision for veterans to pursue a college education is more enticing than ever before. In fact, with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan coming to an end, U.S. colleges are seeing a rise in student veteran populations that have not been seen since World War II (Dillard & Yu, 2016). In 2017, there were already more than 5-million veterans who earned a college

degree by utilizing the Post 9/11 GI Bill (Veterans – *PNPI*, n.d.). Importantly, as veterans begin transitioning back to civilian life, the decision to either find employment or further their education will both bring its own set of challenges.

Some of the challenges that are faced by veterans who enter higher education range from: physical and mental health (Copeland et al., 2011), financial challenges, identity, depression, social reintegration, employment (Dexter, 2020), environmental, social, differences in superior-subordinate relationship perceptions which are psychological and physiological in nature, and even educational decisions, which can be overwhelming for some (Vacchi et al., 2017). Other research highlights the difficulties experienced by veterans returning to civilian life in general (Ahern et al., 2015; Melillo et al., 2019; Vogt et al., 2018), but these complications are often unintentionally overlooked by society. Although efforts have improved in the development of programs that focus on assisting veterans in the transition phase from active duty, the efforts have mostly failed to consider the individual veteran in the classroom of a higher education institution.

Some resources designed to assist veterans in a successful transition range from smaller level organizational initiatives to larger federal level ones. For example, the Marine Corps has developed a resource program specifically designed for successful transition from the military. The training course is mandated by Marine Corps Order (MCO) 1700.31, and requires every separating Service Member to attend a Transition Readiness Seminar no later than six

months before separating from the military (“Transition Readiness Program,” n.d). Attendees of the seminar receive information about employment opportunities, Veterans Affairs benefits, and other personal and professional development prior to their exit. The Post 9/11 GI Bill, which was passed in 2008, increased and expanded education benefits to all eligible veterans. These benefits include; providing equality and ensured comprehensiveness of benefits; meeting recruiting goals; and improved retention of Service Members through a transferability (to specific family members) aspect of the new education bill (Dortch, n.d.). The new Post 9/11 GI Bill helps to cover tuition, books, and fees. It also allows a veteran to receive a monthly stipend. This benefit is responsible for more than 800,000 veterans attending higher education in 2018, which does not include veterans in school under other education programs (Dortch, n.d.). Once a veteran begins using the education benefits, the institution of choice becomes the unofficial surrogate for veteran education assistance resources.

Research shows that higher education institutions have done well with recognizing the challenges involved in helping transitioning veterans enter postsecondary education (O’Herrin, 2011; Blackwell- Starnes, 2018). However, as noted in Blackwell- Starnes (2018):

The emphasis remains largely on assisting transitions to the campus community, with little attention to assisting student veterans in their transition to the classroom community where developing a sense of belonging is more crucial to academic success than developing a sense of belonging to the campus,

especially given that student veterans often manage academic time with family and work obligations; therefore, they are less likely to become engaged with the campus. (p. 19)

The Congressional Budget Office reported that in 2018 alone, the VA spent an estimated \$10.7 billion on education benefit costs (U.S. Congress. Congressional Budget Office, 2019). The implementation of resources available on college campuses that are directed to streamline veterans' college experiences from registration to graduation are fiscally responsible from a macro level when considering the taxpayer's burden of such costs. It also makes sense as an individual university to encourage the success of veteran students as a means of attracting more student veterans with guaranteed tuition dollars. Programs designed to help veterans adjust to life on campus include: a veteran service coordinator, a military transfer enrollment professional, and Veteran Resource/Success Centers (VRC/VSC). According to research conducted as part of his Doctoral program, Kratochvil (2014) concluded that the most useful of these programs was found to be the veteran service coordinator. The veteran service coordinator is the person at the school who provides transitional guidance to veterans who are navigating the process of being certified and eligible to receive GI Bill benefits.

The Veteran Service Coordinator is an important role because the task of navigating through required paperwork and specific processing procedures of using the GI Bill is nuanced. It is especially difficult for a veteran who did not plan

to attend college, thus, is not properly informed on the bureaucratic process involved in the task. Veterans transitioning from military do not always know what they will want to pursue. In fact, Gregg et al. (2016) found that most veterans in their study did not decide to attend higher education until well after their separation from the military. This lack of planning to attend college prior to transitioning highlights the problems found in such programs as the (MCO) 1700.31 mentioned earlier which requires all transitioning military members to attend a Transition Readiness Seminar to help veterans experience a more successful and prepared transition (“Transition Readiness Program,” n.d). Programs that are focused on transitioning veterans can only help those veterans who are willing to learn from the information received in such programs. When a veteran has decided not to prepare for the possibility of unforeseen paths, the veteran service coordinator can serve as the lighthouse guide around the troubles of using the education benefits in which the veteran is eligible. Unfortunately, once a veteran navigates the enrollment process and walks into the classroom, there is no longer an explicitly defined support system visible. A veteran is left to navigate the drastically different environment of a classroom, seemingly all alone. The socialization process in this environment is different than the socialization process of the military environment they just transitioned from.

The differences in desired outcomes or performances of members contributes to the approach an organization will use to socialize newcomers to

the organization. A sharp contrast in approaches between military and higher education are evident in the way each group interacts with their superiors and peers. For instance, in the military members do not have individual freedom to control their own daily routines. They have superiors who are a constant reminder to follow the prescribed rules and regulations. On the other hand, college students have more freedom to choose how they approach their daily lives. A military member often has tasks that contribute to the overall institutional goals of warfighting, while in contrast, a college student's tasks contribute to the overall individual goal (Naphan & Elliott, 2015) of graduating. Thus, the cultural differences between military and higher education means veterans will experience college-life in disparate ways to their more traditional college-student counterparts. For some, it proves to be too difficult to continue.

Moreover, it is important to identify the variables most related to the transition difficulties between military and higher education. One variable found by Graf et al. (2015) suggested that the number of years since active service plays an important variable in success for veteran students. Veterans who have been separated between two and seven years were identified as having the most challenging time adjusting to life as a student in higher education. The reason for these findings is not yet clear but as mentioned in Gregg et al. (2016), the fact that many veterans do not have a plan to attend college immediately after transition and the time it takes to apply, register, and enroll into a college program, is a factor to consider. Although the reason is not yet explicitly known

as to why the time since separation has been shown as a significant factor in experiencing difficulties, there are some things that are notable about a veteran's experience in the U.S military in recent years.

A few significant details to highlight are the fact that many veterans of the most recent wars (OIF and OEF) have been forward deployed to areas across the globe that present legitimate possibilities of being involved in combat action. Our military is an all-volunteer active-duty force. Also, there are fewer troops available than during past conflicts. This means that during the extended conflicts of the recent wars of OIF and OEF, the military has had to increase the deployment cycle rate of available personnel. The Department of Defense has had to initiate military personnel to multiple deployments to OIF/OEF (Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on the Initial Assessment of Readjustment Needs of Military Personnel, Veterans, and Their Families, 2010). In a study by Conner et al. (2016), they noted the negative effects of multiple deployments and the relationship to disabilities. For instance, Army Soldiers and Marines who have deployed multiple times or for longer durations than other branches of the military, are more likely to be diagnosed with certain disabilities than those veterans who have not deployed. Disabilities and the mandatory appointments that accompany a service-connected disability is a challenge to a transitioning veteran on their own. Other factors related to the challenge of transitioning to higher education, are more logistical in nature.

Some additional reasons that contribute to a more problematic time for the student veteran population include working full-time, mandatory VA appointments that are not easily rescheduled, and or unplanned family or personal problems (Blackwell-Starnes, 2018). Although easier to identify these challenges, it's more complicated to identify the supplementary reasons veterans do not continue their pursuit of higher education. Some veterans simply "abandon their education because they cannot effectively transition into the academic setting" (Blackwell-Starnes, 2018, p.19). As she further discussed, Blackwell-Starnes (2018) agreed that college campuses (macro-level) seem to be doing a better job at ensuring the campus is making steps in the right direction to help veterans to transition, but it is in the classroom (micro-level) that remains a crucial space where veteran students develop a sense of belonging on campus. Thus, this project focuses on resources for instructors so that they can carry out the already present mission from the institutional level. To help accomplish this task I considered organizational socialization processes and the concepts of culturally responsive teaching as they relate to the transitioning veterans who enter the classrooms of higher education.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A LOOK AT THE SENSITIZING CONCEPTS USED

#### Organizational Socialization and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Organizationally, the military expects its members to assimilate in very specific ways. The socialization processes used to reach an intended outcome for members is vastly different than socialization processes used in higher education. Also, in higher education, the pedagogical approach used by individual instructors to influence every member of the class can vary depending on the cultural diversity present in the classroom. Each of these concepts will be further defined in the following.

#### Organizational Socialization

According to Kramer and Miller (2014), organizational socialization has foundational roots in sociology and has been applied across contexts in management and organizational behavior. In the 1960s, communication scholars began to examine the socialization process of people who transition from outsiders to insiders of organizations. Scholars began to explicitly identify issues that arose during socialization processes of individuals into organizations. More specifically, Jablin focused on relationships between socialization processes and organizational communication strategies (Kramer & Miller, 1999; 2014).

The purpose of socialization processes is summarized by researchers as the adopting of values, norms, rules, and practices that guide the culture of an organization (Howe & Hinderaker, 2018), the transmission of an organization's

culture to a newcomer that enables the newcomer to accept the organization's behavior (Cable et al., 2013), and the primary means of adapting newcomers to new positions and roles within an organization (Chao et al., 1994). The term organizational socialization was first used to explain the resulting outcomes of experiences individuals have when becoming a member of an organization. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) described organizational socialization as a social scientific phrase that refers to "the process by which one is taught and learns 'the ropes' of a particular organizational role" (p. 3). There are two responses that each member employs in some capacity depending on how organization leadership approaches the socialization process. A custodial response is a conforming response where a newcomer to an organization accepts the already present knowledge and tasks associated with an organizational role. An innovative response is described as a nonconforming stance to the predefined assumed knowledge and tasks of an organizational role (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). There are six tactical (strategic) dimensions (which are communicative in nature) that are expressed as substantial in determining the degree a newcomer to an organization will respond as either custodial, or innovative.

The tactics used either consciously or unconsciously by organizational members during the socialization of newcomers are "essentially process variables akin to, but more specific than such general transitional processes such as education, training, apprenticeship, or sponsorship" (Van Maaneen & Schein, 1979, p. 35). The six tactical dimensions presented as contradictions, in the

socialization process are: collective vs. individual; formal vs. informal; sequential vs. random steps; fixed vs. variable; serial vs. disjunctive; and investiture vs. divestiture. For example, if a custodial response is the desired outcome, the organization should implement a socialization process that is sequential, variable, serial, and involves a divestiture process. This means a series of stages without specific timelines for advancement, with active role models, and the involvement of a newcomer's identity change (pp. 68-69). These tactical dimensions informed research into organizational outcomes resulting from the implementation of different socialization tactics (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Table 1.1 summarizes the tactical dimensions and provides example outcomes of organizational members. The example outcomes listed in the table are possible outcomes from my own perspective, not absolute outcomes.

**Table 1.1. Summary Description of Socialization Tactics**

Socialization Tactics	Organizational Application
Collective vs. individual	Newcomers receive common experiences as a group vs. receiving individual experiences.
Formal vs. informal	Using specific methods and materials to train newcomers for roles while separating newcomers from other members (i.e., new hire training) vs. immediate inclusion with existing members with no specified training requirement (i.e., sink or swim).
Sequential vs. random	A progression of learning expected tasks in a sequence, vs. no defined order of task learning expected.
Fixed vs. variable	A specified time to progress through the socialization steps vs. no specific time required.
Serial vs. disjunctive	Experienced organizational members serving as role models/mentors to newcomers vs. no role models/mentors provided.
Investiture vs. divestiture	Provide newcomers with what they need to succeed in the role as an individual while maintaining identity vs. stripping away personal ideas and beliefs and replacing with values of the organization.
Example Tactics for Desired Outcome	
<p>The image contains two diagrams. The first diagram, on the left, features a central grey circle labeled 'Innovative'. It is surrounded by four light blue circles: 'Disjunctive' at the top, 'Fixed' on the right, 'Random' at the bottom, and 'Investiture' on the left. The second diagram, on the right, features a central light blue circle labeled 'Custodial'. It is surrounded by four grey circles: 'Sequential' at the top, 'Variable' on the right, 'Serial' at the bottom, and 'Divestiture' on the left.</p>	
<p>Informed by Van Maanen, J., &amp; Schein, E. H. (1979). Toward a theory of organizational socialization. In B. M. Staw (Ed.), <i>Research in organizational behavior</i> (pp. 209-264). Greenwich, CT: JAI.</p>	

As researchers began expanding on the work of Van Maanen and Schein, limitations were identified and continue to be areas in need of investigation, namely the “dimensionality of the socialization domain” (Chao et al., 1994, p. 731). Further investigation demonstrated that socialization is worthy of inquiry within the communication discipline.

Jablin introduced his model of assimilation in 1984 that included four phases: anticipatory, encounter, metamorphosis, and exit (Kramer & Miller, 2014). Jablin (2001) further identified the assimilation phases in an organization as: organizational entry, assimilation, and disengagement/ exit. For this project, the 3-phase model of assimilation was used because the encounter and metamorphosis phases are sometimes referred to as the same phase. These phases can be explained in simple terms when thinking about the process of entering a new career. Researchers, including Kramer and Miller (2014) use similar language when summarizing what each of the phases represents in simple terms. For example, the anticipatory phase is represented by the situations encountered during the time leading up to joining an organization. This is similar to the steps someone might take when planning a career move, deciding to apply, to join, and even prepare to interview with an organization. The encounter phase is summarized as the phase that a newcomer experiences at the closer end of the boundary passage into a new organization. Simply stated as the beginning of the transition into an organization where newcomers first experience the discrepancies in their expectations of the organization and reality.

The metamorphosis phase is when a person no longer feels like an outsider, but rather more as an accepted member of the organization. The exit phase is when an individual leaves the organization. These phases of assimilation are laid out as a process that all newcomers experience in similar ways, across all types of organizations. Table 1.2 summarizes the assimilation phases of the socialization process and provides some examples of the phases in context of this project.

**Table 1.2. Summary Description of Assimilation Phases of Socialization Process**

<b>Three (3) Phases of Assimilation During the Socialization Process</b>		
<b>Anticipatory</b>	<b>Encounter/ Metamorphosis</b>	<b>Exit/ Disengagement</b>
The anticipatory phase is characterized by the communicative moments prior to joining an organization. These moments can span from early childhood to any moment prior to officially joining the organization.	A new member is formally invited to join an organization. When a new member determines if their expectations are met. Progresses from being a new but not fully accepted member to a sense of belonging	Usually refers to a known moment of upcoming exit from an organization. The communicative moments in this phase contribute to how the member who is exiting and the members who are remaining interact and ultimately feel about the exit.
<b>Examples in Context</b>		
<b>Military Examples</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching various branches of military to identify which branch is the best fit for an individual</li> <li>• Speaking with current or previous members about their experience</li> <li>• Visiting a recruiter’s office seeking information about joining a specific branch</li> <li>• Statements like, “I want to join the Army when I graduate”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduating from bootcamp</li> <li>• Checking into the first unit for duty</li> <li>• Participating in a particular event or experience (combat, field training exercise, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><i>*Could occur at different moments for each member or even not all</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of service contract (EAS)</li> <li>• Retirement</li> <li>• Medically separated</li> <li>• Any discharge</li> <li>• Checking out of military unit</li> <li>• Military gear return</li> <li>• Attending Transition Assistance Programs (TAP)</li> <li>• Receiving DD-214 (signed discharge form)</li> </ul>
<b>Higher Education Examples</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committing to good grades to help with college acceptance</li> <li>• Doing specific tasks because they “would look great on a college application”</li> <li>• Committing to high sports performance in hopes of receiving a scholarship to college</li> <li>• Visiting college campuses to tour the campus</li> <li>• Speaking with current or previous members about their experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending orientation</li> <li>• Receiving acceptance letters</li> <li>• Move-in week</li> <li>• Registering for classes</li> <li>• Club rush week</li> <li>• Becoming more active on campus</li> <li>• Participating more in classroom discussions</li> <li>• Graduation Preparation</li> </ul> <p><i>* Could occur at different moments for each member or even not all</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final exam preparations during last term</li> <li>• Job searching</li> <li>• Graduation</li> </ul>

As noted in Howe and Hinderaker (2018), most organizational socialization research has focused on the processes involved in socializing employees into a business organization with few exceptions. In one such exception, Zorn and Gregory (2005) conceptualized “assimilation in medical school as a process in which the school attempts to ‘shape’ newcomers in particular ways, and in which newcomers simultaneously strive to shape and make sense of their new situation and roles” (p. 213). Studies like this show how not all organizations can fit neatly in a defined box of descriptive adjectives. For instance, military and higher education organizations will not have the same goal for members entering the organization. The tactics that are used are variables to manipulate and adjust for a desired outcome of members. Therefore, the tactics used to socialize newcomers to organizations should be determined with specific desired outcomes in mind.

The military represents a highly structured organization. When military members first enlist, the socialization process is precise. Cable et al. (2013) discussed how the goal of highly structured organizations is to use tactics of socialization that will remove any doubt about how a member should react and respond to institutional communication processes to include messages, values, and situations. Cable et al. (2013) continued explaining how organizations that tend to favor individualized socialization tactics that encourage uncertainty and the questioning of the way things are done will result in members responding creatively but unpredictably also.

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) proposed a place to begin investigating organizational socialization. Cable et al. (2013) suggested a new way to look at the opposing ends of the individualized to structured continuum by offering advice to organizations who desire a structured outcome for new members. The advice suggested putting newcomers through similar off duty learning experiences, giving newcomers explicit information about how their roles will be expected to progress, and to provide experienced members to mentor and guide them through the socialization process. This tactic of socialization includes a significant investment of time, money, and resources. In contrast, Cable et al. (2013) described the individualization tactics as the exact opposite. There are no formal trainings, mentors, or expectation guidelines. All of which results in a smaller investment, but also for a potential to influence innovation. For instance, during my time in the Marine Corps, I had no doubt how I was expected to respond to the institutional communication processes. I was aware of how I should approach everything. The Marine Corps invested a lot of time and money to ensure I responded as expected. When I transitioned out of the military and began attending college, I did not have similar specific guidelines to follow. I was only expected to pay tuition, register for classes, and then left to either sink or swim. This process of socialization left me less confident in where and what I was doing, but it allowed for me to be creative and determine my own educational path. This experience was uncomfortable as a newly transitioned veteran. The socialization processes of these two different organizations resulted

in outcomes that each of the organizations desired, custodial (from military) and innovative (higher education). Cable et al. (2013) mentioned that although innovation is possible due to individuals relying on their own experience, knowledge, and creativity to complete tasks, most likely the “uncertainty may result in more discomfort than successful innovation” (p. 5).

These descriptions of various tactics show the differences among highly structured and individualized organizational socialization tactics. The military is an example of an organization that uses highly structured socialization tactics, and higher education is an example of an organization that uses more individualized socialization tactics. For instance, the military often has team-oriented tasks that need completed to meet institutional goals; therefore, a highly structured tactic encourages members’ custodial response appropriately. In contrast, a college student often has independent work to achieve individual goals (Naphan & Elliott, 2015), such as graduating, which is best attained through individualized socialization tactics that encourage innovation. This concept of different socialization tactics is echoed again in Howe and Hinderaker (2018) where they looked at the socialization processes of two totalistic organizations through lived experiences.

A totalistic organization is an organization that has a large influence on the lives of its members. The term was coined by Hinderaker (2015) and used to identify common traits of certain organizations such as: memberships being value-based; the organization having an active role in member’s lives outside of

organizational boundaries; member's family and close friends are linked to the organization; and membership in the organization requires a declaration of allegiance, often in a formal manner. The two organizations that were studied are the U.S. military, and a strict religious organization. The expectations of the rigid organizations in the study were to instill a strong sense of reach into all aspects of the members lives in order to influence the behaviors of the members. The socialization strategies of different organizations are not similar across the spectrum of organization types. If the strategies of socialization change among organizations, the processes and outcomes would also.

The way that new members become socialized contributes to how much they feel like part of the organization. It seems necessary to consider that the more reach an organization has into the lives of its members, the more impact the experience will have on the member's identity development. In fact, McLean and Syed (2014) explained the various aspects of identity development that include processes and content. Simply stated, the content of identity "can be viewed as the kinds of domains in which one is exploring (e.g., religion), the specifics within an identity domain (e.g., Christianity vs. atheism), or the kinds of experiences one is reflecting on [e.g., parental divorce]" (p. 4). Reflecting on structural experiences encountered in active military service may create confusion in identity for veterans in college.

## Organizational Socialization in Context

Military. The experience in socialization processes that occur in the rigid environment of the military, is different than the socialization process experienced by traditional college students with no military experience. For example, after the exit phase from military service to the anticipatory phase of choosing, finding, applying, and registering in higher education, a veteran enters the encounter phase which includes a drastic change of environment. The past experiences of veterans are contradicting to the experiences of college life. The experiences have potential to create a loss of identity. The idea of accepting the norms and values commonly found in higher education after having had to immerse fully into the norms and values of the military, is a transition that is drastically different from one another.

Howe and Hinderaker (2018) described the process of socialization as inherently one of adopting the values, norms, rules, and practices of an organization, while at the same time letting go of previously held beliefs of accepted behaviors that formed individual identity. In the military the socialization process begins even before arriving at boot camp (recruit/ basic training). It is common for recent recruits that have signed their enlistment papers but have not shipped to boot camp yet, to participate in team activities with the local military recruitment team and other pre-boot camp recruits. This anticipatory phase is designed to prepare recruits for the realities of boot camp. The specific purpose of basic training (encounter phase) is to produce men and women who will obey

all lawful orders received from higher in the chain of command (Knight, 1990).

The socialization tactics of the military are designed to transform the individual through “what cultural anthropologists and mythologists call ‘rites of passage’ and particularly ‘rites of initiation’ (Knight, 1990, p. 159).

The graduation from recruit training, symbolizes that the transformation has begun, and the “rite of initiation” has been passed. Along the way though, other attitudes are expected to be adopted. In the Marine Corps especially, the attitude of invincibility is expected. This invincibility is presented as an attainable goal that a recruit can aspire to adopting as a personal characteristic, as the “drill instructor [who] is a Marine, and therefore superhuman” is the omnipotent being (and mentor) guiding your transformation through the initial socialization process of the military (Knight, 1990, p. 159). The suppression of individualism, the feeling of fearlessness, and the unwavering loyalty to the organization are the attitudes and values that are expected as an outcome of the socialization process of the military (Knight, 1990). The expected outcome for the socialization process of a higher education organization is not the same.

Higher Education. In an early article about socialization in a school setting, Grant (1979) described socialization as the technique to prepare the younger population for current and existing conditions. Grant stated that conflicting desired outcomes of innovation and conformity, does not allow a school to be able to promote the internalization of societal norms and a desire among students to effect social change simultaneously. With this opposing view of

intended outcomes for institutions of higher education, the processes of socialization tactics may differ. The agents involved in the socialization process of higher education organizations are not bound by rigid conformity guidelines, as implied through the concept of “academic freedom” offered to instructors in higher education. The flexibility in this approach to socialization tactic implementation does not offer an individual in the anticipatory phase of socialization an opportunity to fully understand what to expect in the new organization. This may lead to increased anxiety for a veteran who is transitioning from the socialization process of a rigid (and consistent) structure of the military into the unknown structure of the higher education organization.

Van Maanen and Schein (1979) identified assumptions related to socialization and include the anxiety that the situation of entering a new organization causes individuals. The anxiety is likely due to the initial feeling of identity loss with the new ambient environment observed. Another idea is that socialization does not occur in a vacuum, but rather in and around an interactional zone that surrounds the newcomer. Anyone in the encounter phase of transitioning into an organization will rely on the clues of others in the immediate geographical vicinity to learn the new role. The people in this interactional zone will ultimately be the same people to provide the new member with a “sense of accomplishment and competence [or failure and incompetence]” (p. 9). In a classroom, this interactional zone includes instructors and other students who are enrolled in the same class. The interactional zone, and the

agents involved, will change with each classroom. It is in the classroom that the transitioning veteran experiences the encounter phase of their new organization. The outcome desired by each instructor in the new organizational setting of college, will determine how each veteran will either successfully socialize into the new environment or find the new organization difficult to assimilate into. Therefore, some consistency is key to veteran student success. Another consideration of the classroom is the symbolic relationships that occur.

In a longitudinal study that measured information acquisition among newcomers in organizations, Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) analyzed four contextual domains to include task domain, role domain, group domain, and organizational domain. The results of the study indicated that “supervisors are heavily relied upon as interpersonal sources [of information acquisition] for all domains, [and] coworkers will be the most critical sources for the group domain” (pp. 852-853). In a college classroom, it is useful to visualize the instructors as the supervisors, and the student peers as coworkers. This connection highlights the necessity of instructors to understand the socialization challenges that veterans might or might not experience differently than their traditional student population. To enhance the commitment to and satisfaction of a veteran who is transitioning from and into vastly different organizations, instructors should be aware of the importance of them being a primary source of information gathering during the socialization process (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Knowing more

about the perspectives of the students in the classroom is a beginning step in culturally responsive pedagogy, which will be introduced next.

### Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) acknowledges that the “educational position of minoritized students could be improved with teacher’s attention to the variability in their student’s experiences and needs” (Abacioglu et al., 2020, p. 738). Currently though, much of the CRP research focuses on the K-12 curriculum and ethnicity as the cultural consideration (e.g., Brown, 2004; Griffin et al., 2016; Samuels, 2018). This presents the opportunity to contribute research that can extend the concept of CRP to higher education. For this project, veterans represent the minoritized student demographic. CRP is defined further by Gay (2002) as the use of “cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (p. 106). The benefits of approaching pedagogy using the concepts of CRP are well researched, however, its impact on student’s cognitive learning is not (Sleeter, 2012). Educators who employ CRP should consider the five elements deemed essential by Gay (2002), which include: 1.) Gaining cultural knowledge about diversity; 2.) The inclusion of ethnic and culturally diverse content in curriculum; 3.) Building a sense of community and caring in class; 4.) Communicating across cultures; and 5.) Responding to ethnically diverse delivery of education. These elements collectively can be summarized as

building a classroom climate that is welcoming, comfortable, nurturing, challenging, and inclusive.

The classroom climate influences students and is mostly determined by the teacher (Simonds & Cooper, 2011). A positive social climate includes a mutual trust between teachers and students, a teacher's use of motivational and encouragement techniques, and a fairness for including students' participation in class (Geršicová, 2016). Everything said or done (i.e., verbal and nonverbal) in a particular classroom environment contributes to the overall climate of that class. Creating a classroom climate that aids in the learning process is a "critical component of preparation for culturally responsive teaching" (Gay, 2002, p. 109). To ensure a supportive climate, a teacher should develop ways for students to build their self-image and enhance their self-concept (Simonds & Cooper, 2011). A more developed sense of self, will enhance students' comfort and subsequently boost participation. With students' increased participation in a class, each student will help contribute to the entire class's overall knowledge gained from multiple perspectives and cultural backgrounds.

Instructors may have an opportunity to gain understanding of students' cultural backgrounds before students enter the classroom. An instructor can research the demographic statistical data for the population of the students who will be attending the school. Through an opportunity to participate in a cultural immersion experience, new perspectives can inform the decisions being made in preparing to use CRP. The instructor's ability to take perspectives into account

when teaching is important in navigating the intricacies of numerous cultural diversities in classrooms. Notably, the qualities of being able to take various perspectives of students in class and the multicultural attitudes of instructors “are malleable [qualities] and thus can be improved inasmuch as teachers build on top of their existing knowledge on their student’s values, beliefs, communities, personal lives, and experiences” (Abacioglu et al., 2020, p. 745). In the moments of caring enough to understand who the students truly are, relationships will inevitably be formed. These relationships will contribute to a more supportive classroom climate. Therefore, despite the initial focus in K-12 curriculum and solely on ethnicity, CRP has an overarching benefit to all educational levels and expanded cultural considerations (e.g., Brown, 2004; Griffin et al., 2016; Samuels, 2018). Connecting the concepts of CRP and applying them to a more diverse meaning of the word *culture*, will provide a greater understanding of best practices for instructor’s culturally responsive pedagogical considerations at all levels of education (i.e., higher education), with all aspects of culture (i.e., veterans).

Culture has been defined by scholars in various ways. McDaniel et al. (2006) provided a more applied definition of culture by stating that “culture is the rules for living and functioning in society” (p. 10) and that these rules will be different in each context. Understanding and applying these rules is crucial in order to be functionally effective, and to a certain extent accepted. As classrooms continue to be filled with various students, an understanding and appreciation of

cultural differences will benefit the overall classroom. Even if we are not fully aware of it, culture has a strong influence on the ways we process the world around us. Our culture and our experiences influence the way we communicate, and carry ourselves. Furthermore, these lived experiences affect how people teach and learn (Gay, 2018). Just as ethnic diversity among students can bring new perspectives to a classroom, so can other diverse groups such as veterans. Each students' cultural background and experiences lived will contribute strengths that instructors can utilize in their pedagogical approach.

In a CRP focused learning environment, the “strengths [that] students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement” (Richards et al., 2007, p. 64). This can be achieved by instructors learning to view the world through the perspectives of students, and by allowing students to share from their own perspectives. Perspectives held by individual students are formed by their lived experiences. When students feel like they can connect to the curriculum from familiar standpoints, it helps them feel more connected to the learning experience.

Although most CRP research is focused on ethnicity as the cultural consideration (e.g., Brown, 2004; Griffin et al., 2016; Samuels, 2018), this project connects the concepts of CRP to veteran college students as a cultural consideration. Because of this early focus on other areas of interest, careful consideration needs to be taken when connecting the concepts of CRP to this demographic. For instance, Gay (2002) identified three types of curricula that are

most often found in classrooms: formal curriculum, which includes the approved teaching plans of the states; symbolic curriculum, which includes symbols such as imagery, rules of the classroom, and other artifacts that are displayed; and what she credits Cortés as labeling the societal curriculum. The societal curriculum can collectively be thought of as the things people learn about other cultures through mass media which become the only knowledge of other cultures that is received. For instance, when a fictional television program about war becomes the only exposure to military culture, it can influence how military members are perceived. Mass media, including television, is more accessible to some students than classroom textbooks are. Therefore, it is in this hard to control medium (social curriculum) that students often learn of cultures that are different than their own.

Societal curriculum, referred to by Gay (2002) and is highlighted in Hodges (2018), explains the common stereotypes that are associated to veterans are due to media portrayals. With less than 10% of the U.S population being veterans (Bialik, 2017), there is often an unfamiliarity to what being a veteran means. The media often portrays veterans in one of two ways: either a battle tested stoic hero who is not afraid of anything and has a violent side; or an emotionally fragile, mentally affected, can snap at any moment type personality (Hodges, 2018). These stereotypes that are applied to veterans may cause challenges in individuals when they transition from military member to college student.

CRP is not only about reaching and connecting with all students, but it is also about identifying and using the students' own strengths to help them and others learn (Gay, 2000). CRP encourages the use of student's own referents to empower them. It demands that students attain success in academia, build competence in their culture, and learn to think critically in order to challenge the status quo (Harmon, 2012). These expectations are obstacles that once conquered will contribute to the strength seen by the individual student when self-reflecting. This helps to inspire students to be proud of their cultural identity, be respectful of their peers, and increases the chance of relationship building in the classroom (Samuels, 2018). These expectant outcomes will help build a positive environment where students can become what Watkins et al. (2007), describe as an effective learner. This is a person who can acquire the skill to learn and use various strategies to approach different contexts and purposes of curriculum. Some examples include the ability to comprehend text when studying alone, creating knowledge through interaction with others, and engaging in conversations with people of different perspectives, and generally learning how to learn by themselves (Carnell et al. 2000, Watkins et al. 2007). Even with the benefits that CRP research has shown in helping to build inclusive educational environments, it is not an easy task to accomplish wholeheartedly.

The best of intentions can prove to be difficult for instructors to incorporate all facets of CRP. As mentioned previously, Gay (2002) identified the inclusion of ethnic and culturally diverse content in curriculum as an important element in

preparing for CRP. This inclusion of diverse content has the capability to challenge existing ideologies and biases of instructors and other students in class. Examples given in Samuels (2018) include: when a student or an instructor has a religious belief that rejects an acceptance to LGBTQ culture, or the deep divide caused by opposing ideologies between *Black Lives Matter* advocates and *Blue Lives Matter* advocates. Another example is an anti-war ideology by an instructor or student, and a proud combat veteran identity held by another. These situations will arise because the experiences of everyone involved are so diverse. An instructor trying to approach educating from a CRP position will be faced with the decision to either navigate the difficult situation or avoid it all together. The decision to do one or the other will determine the success or failure of the situation. This challenge is significant in that if instructors avoid these tough situations, they will not be able to master the difficult discourse needed to engage in the deep discussions that may arise in a culturally diverse classroom. Samuels (2018) identified four areas that instructors would benefit from engaging in a professional development course, or other learning opportunities that allow them to: 1.) Explore their existing ideas of diversity through self-reflection; 2.) Engage in controversial discussions to increase situational awareness as a facilitator of difficult discourse; 3.) Learn and incorporate inclusive teaching strategies into the educational environment; and 4.) Engage in honest and open conversations with peers on how to foster an

inclusive climate for all cultures in a classroom. The culture of veteran college student, is a culture that cannot be ignored in the CRP conversation.

As stated in Jenner, (2017) the difficulties that are experienced by veterans transitioning into higher education are similar to the difficulties felt by nontraditional, first-generational, and underrepresented minority students. These similar difficulties include: divergent life experiences, financial issues, gaps in education, higher attrition rates, incongruent cultural familiarity with the dominant culture, and general lack of perceived support from peers. This comparison of similar experiences between these different culture types, shows the importance of including veterans into the conversations of CRP.

The different perspectives veterans bring to a classroom can vary greatly, but every unique perspective in the classroom will impact the overall climate in that class. As instructors prepare to implement a CRP approach, attempting to understand different cultures is essential. An opportunity to experience a small part of how different cultures come to view the world is something that could enhance a teacher preparation course, or learning module intended to help veterans learn. This can be done through participation in cultural training. Norman et al. (2015), identified the benefit of teaching educators about the strengths and skills that veterans often gain from military service when they “suggested [that] training in military culture for faculty and staff would help Veterans succeed in school” (p. 708) by gaining an insight into the lived experiences of veteran students. This will bring an appreciation to the skills that

are required in military service. Military skills are not simply the tangible skills listed in a Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) job description section. The skills learned in the military include intangible skills such as leadership, discipline, performance under pressure, courage, dealing with adversity, and mission accomplishment. These intangible skills are strengths that instructors can learn to access through the relationships they build with their veteran students.

Classrooms will continue to be diverse spaces for learning. Understanding that culture contributes to identity and is something that is vastly different for each cultural group, is a premise of CRP. Veterans represent a minoritized college student culture. Therefore, incorporating the insights found in CRP research, connecting those ideas to the college student veteran population, and developing best practices for classrooms where veterans are enrolled, is an important aspect to be included in the CRP conversation.

My review of current literature in organizational socialization processes and outcomes, culturally responsive pedagogy, and how veteran students are facing unique challenges in the classrooms of higher education has led to the interest in creating a guidebook for instructors of higher education who will undoubtedly have veteran students in their classrooms. The guidebook will: consider the findings in extant research and the lived experiences of a Marine Corps veteran college student; introduce socialization tactics that instructors could use to achieve a desired outcome when assimilating veterans into the role

of student; and provide suggestions on using concepts in CRP to help provide a positive classroom climate for veteran students

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### Why a Methodology Section for a Project?

The inclusion of a methods section for this project is to show the systematic approach I took while creating the guidebook. The structure of the guidebook was designed to include my own reflexive input as a way of providing a perspective to the included information. I juxtaposed the results of existing studies related to organizational socialization processes, and culturally responsive pedagogy with my personal experiences as a veteran student in higher education. In this section, I will explain my approach to the research process used to create the project.

#### Researcher Position

I align paradigmatically as an interpretive scholar. Tracy (2020) identified an interpretive point of view as what she termed “social construction” due to the fact that reality and knowledge “are constructed through communication, interaction, and practice” (p.51). I believe each person creates their own reality through individual lived experiences. Therefore, I connect to the ontological view that reality is socially constructed. I do not consider the world in terms of absolutes. Each perspective can be the truth for the person who owns it, therefore, epistemologically I am drawn to the subjective nature of reality. My truth comes from the experiences that I have and do encounter on a continuous basis. I recognize that my truth today may be different tomorrow, but it remains

my truth in the moment. I accept that truths are not absolute. My axiological position is that it is important to consider the unique perspectives that others hold. These perspectives are formed through individual experiences and represent the truths that shape an individual's beliefs. I recognize that my subjectivity is a factor in the findings of my research. This subjectivity ultimately influenced the elements chosen to include in the guidebook. To remain led by my ethical code I included only the most honest recollections of my reflections and informed the readers of moments of uncertainty in accurate recall of an experience. Collectively, each perspective contributes to a deeper understanding of the experiences veterans have when in a classroom of higher education. I approached this project through a self-reflection of experiences by performing autoethnographic research in the form of comparing existing studies to my experiences as a veteran college student. My autoethnographic writing will be retrospective in my journey from military to higher education and as a graduate teaching associate. I have navigated these processes and transitions successfully, and want to help other veterans become success stories by providing instructors in higher education with a guidebook informed by research and a veteran's perspective. My findings informed the most relevant elements to include in a guidebook for instructors in higher education who will have veteran students in their classroom. I will now discuss the methods that were used to create the guidebook.

## Method

I conducted an autoethnographic process using self-reflection through a narrative lens. This was an iterative task used to identify elements to include in the guidebook. I used academic databases to identify extant studies related to veterans transitioning to higher education and reflected on the experiences remembered of my own transition from military to college. When appropriate to do so, my reflections and memories of my experiences as a veteran student were compared to the findings in extant research to identify similarities and differences between the findings in the research and my own experience of this transition. One example of a difference that was noticed, is in the research that Kratochvil (2014) conducted and identified the Veteran Service Coordinator as the most valuable resource for veteran students. For me, my most valuable resource was having instructors allow and encourage me to accept my experiences and share them. When a comparison was not appropriate, but the insight was relevant to the guidebook, it was included. To accomplish this project, I adhered to several guiding principles.

The intended process to create the guidebook was to begin with an extensive review of existing literature and studies relating to: the transition of military members into higher education, organizational socialization phases, procedures, differences in outcomes of socialization techniques, and using culturally responsive teaching concepts. The concepts I was interested in are organizational socialization processes of military and higher education, and how

to best understand the culture of veterans (as created through the socialization processes) in order to plan culturally responsive pedagogical insights to this specific demographic of college student. The previously published studies that were researched consisted of two different sources. Peer reviewed literature was the primary source for gathering extant studies, suggestions, and previous insights and findings. Grey literature, which DeBellis (2020) described as research that is usually unpublished and includes things such as theses, dissertations, white papers, research reports, government reports, and other similar material was only used on an as-needed basis for clarity and/or explanation.

Autoethnography guided my reflection for this project. Autoethnography is a research method that puts the researcher as the subject. As described by Spry (2001) it is the “[reflection] on the subjective self in context with others [that] is the scholarly sagaciousness offered by autoethnography. Good autoethnography is not simply a confessional tale of self-renewal; it is a provocative weave of story and theory” (p. 713). It is “narrative research ... [that] refers to the systematic study, analysis, and narrative description of one’s own experiences, interactions, culture, and identity” (Tracy, 2020, p. 69). I used this method because I feel it is important to bring my own lived experiences into creating the guidebook. I have found that my experience of transitioning into higher education as a veteran is not unique, but is also incongruent with some of the literature I have been exposed to throughout my educational journey. I have been the veteran student

in class who was feeling that I did not belong. I have had to conceal my emotions at times in order to save face. I have reflected on my journey and believe my experiences can contribute to the existing literature.

Autoethnographic research is qualitative and requires an ability to recognize the self as both the subject and the researcher. As Ronai (1995) stated the goal of autoethnographic research allows an attempt to communicate personal experiences to the reader by reflecting on memories, roles, and theories that relate to the topic she was writing at the time. Ronai (1995) claimed that these lived experiences are not privileged over others' experiences, but hoped to provide an appeal to the people who will read the text. For this reason, by reflecting on moments of my journey from military to higher education, I filled in some gaps found in current research from the most unique perspective available; myself, a Marine Corps veteran college student. I ethically represented an honest reflection of my experiences in order to contribute meaningful substance to the guidebook. In the following section I discuss the ethical considerations of autoethnographic writing and research.

### Ethical Considerations

The aspect of involving yourself as both subject and researcher is unique and subjective in nature. Although the intent was to reflect on my own experiences, my experiences involve other participants that contribute to the remembered moments. Autoethnographic research is not just a story told in a moment of time to be remembered or forgotten. These stories are written and

become frozen in time to live forever (Lapadat, 2017). As the author of autoethnographic research is identifiable, it could be assumed that the close relationships that end up in the reflexive writing may be identifiable as well. To avoid others from being identified, I thought that I would have to create fictional aspects of identifying details in both the other people present in a reflected memory and the environments if they were easily recognized through the telling of the story. I found I did not need to include fictional aspects because the experiences were exclusively my own. Other identities would be difficult to identify. I made every effort to represent only my interpretation of the memories, while avoiding the insertion of opinionated assumptions of others' perceptions of the situation being described. To do this project ethically, and in a way that contributes value to the guidebook, I used the following procedures.

#### Data Collection and Interpretation

As data sources, I used a combination of headnotes, memory of lived experiences, and just a few journal entries that were written while I was in the Marine Corps. This helped to contribute my own perceptions of my reality as it relates to the findings of extant studies on the transition experiences of military veterans into higher education. As I researched relevant studies that offered findings or suggestions on the organizational processes used to socialize members, ways to prepare and use CRP, and how these two topics integrate into the transition experiences of veteran students, I wrote in detail about what my experiences have been. This project required myself to be open to vulnerability

and criticism in several ways. I had to include aspects of lived experiences which I am used to keeping to myself. Some of the things that have made my transition to higher education an experience worth sharing are things that I have intentionally kept to myself, or reserved for deep conversations with my wife. Examples include; the doubt I kept within myself during moments of difficulty during the first encounter phase of socialization into higher education as a veteran; the criticism that I was hiding from by not revealing myself as a Marine; and the way I entered classrooms and made myself aware of my environment and the people in it. My reflections gave my personality a chance to come to the forefront of conversation in the guidebook. These were the potential risks that I decided to accept as I continued this method to create a relevant project. I initially felt the autoethnographic approach would feel more uncomfortable. It turned out to be a therapeutic journey.

As I researched existing literature relating to the transitions of veterans into higher education, I journaled my thought process as I reflected on my lived experiences as they related to the findings in the studies. I reflected on the physical and emotional memories of scenes that have been important in my transition experience. These scenes included moments of time that led to joining the military, serving in the military, transitioning from the military into higher education, the challenges I have had as a student, and the way these moments have impacted my experience as a veteran student in higher education. The information produced in the autoethnographic writing was used along with a few

previously written journal entries of my time in military service. This collection of remembered moments contributed my personal experiences into the project. This allowed for more clarity for readers to understand that experiences can vary and the suggestions in the guidebook are not designed to be rigid, instead, they should serve as guidance for consideration when a veteran student enters the classroom. I used an iterative process to make sense of the information in conjunction with my sensitizing concepts in the reflective writing (Tracy, 2020). As I would write and reflect, I had to decide which reflections made sense to include into the guidebook. Not everything from my reflection writing would make sense to include in the guidebook, but it all contributed to the process of my thinking and connection to my experience. As I wrote my reflections, I was not initially taking time to consider grammar and punctuation. It was during the iterative process when I noticed and fixed any grammatical errors found. I added the most pertinent reflections into the guidebook.

### Future Plans

This project has been good for me mentally. My hopes for the future are to develop the project into a more in-depth version for training purposes. I would like use the guidebook as a stepping-stone to a stand-alone training that can be used for a program in higher education. I would also like to seek input from other veterans so I can incorporate more veteran perspectives. This guidebook is something I would like to see as a perpetual document that adjusts over time to new findings in research and situational changes. I would like to see a guidebook

that puts the onus on veteran students. I feel it would be beneficial to have a similar guidebook from the student veteran's perspective.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

The timing of this project is nearly perfect. 9/11 happened 20 years ago this year. Some of the veterans who will be entering our classrooms are the individuals who were called to serve their country in a time of chaos and confusion, and, with a desire that could not be stopped. 20 years later these individuals are looking at being eligible for retirement and will transition into the next mission of their lives. For some, they will take advantage of the improvements in the educational benefits that eligible veterans now have access to. Therefore, a supplemental resource such as the guidebook for this project, is timely, relevant, and contributes to the conversation of veterans in higher education.

My own experience of transitioning from the Marine Corps and into higher education was filled with emotional difficulties as well as the physical pain that now accompanies me daily. I understand that I am not alone in this challenging period of time in a veteran's life. Veterans from all over the world can benefit from instructors in higher education gaining an understanding of who they are and how they can be more effectively included into the classroom. The literature found in organizational socialization studies and culturally responsive pedagogy does well to inform readers of various considerations. The noticeable gap in the relevant research, is the consideration of the individual veteran who is sitting in the classrooms of higher education and trying to be a success story.

Although success is the desire, factors remain that can make for a difficult time. For this reason, the creation of the guidebook reflects my own difficult factors and how I found success in my transition.

I used the autoethnographic point of view to compare existing research to my own experience when it was appropriate to do so. The perspective that I bring to the guidebook is from lived experiences as a Marine Corps combat veteran and a college student. I am familiar with the socialization processes of both military and higher education, and the various ways that instructors either did or did not use that helped me to be successful in the transition from military to higher education. My hope is that the guidebook will serve as a supplement to resources that are available to instructors of veteran students.

The guidebook is not able to include every situation that instructors will encounter when a veteran student enters the classroom. This project is designed to offer insight that piques the interest of instructors who are trying to understand how veterans experience the socialization phases differently between military and higher education organizations, and how veteran students can be more understood as a culture to consider in pedagogical endeavors. The guidebook will serve as only a piece to a puzzle that deserves to be completed. It is a start to addressing the gap in existing literature in the discussions of veterans in higher education.

APPENDIX A

OUT OF THE MILITARY, INTO THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM:  
A GUIDEBOOK FOR INSTRUCTORS OF VETERAN STUDENTS IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION

## Table of Contents

Section 1. Veteran Students.....	55
1.1 Who Joins the Military?.....	556
1.2 Attracting a Specific Demographic During Recruiting Efforts.....	556
Marine Corps.....	557
Army.....	558
Air Force.....	558
Navy.....	59
1.3 Military Rank from Lowest to Highest.....	59
1.4 Duty Station and Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) .....	63
1.5 Discharge Status.....	64
1.6 Deployments .....	65
Section 2. Veteran Students into Higher Education.....	67
2.1 Higher Numbers of Veterans Seeking Education.....	67
2.2 A Valuable On-Campus Resource for Information .....	67
2.3 Organizations Helping Newcomers Feel Welcomed .....	67
Section 3. Becoming Socially Accepted in An Organization .....	69
3.1 The Desired Response of New Members .....	69
3.2 A “Not So” Simple Model.....	72
3.3 The Anticipation of Joining an Organization.....	72
3.4 “I’m Here! Now What?”.....	75
Section 4. Culturally Responsive Teaching in the College Classroom .....	80
4.1 Considering Culture in the Classroom .....	80
4.2 Considering the Classroom Climate.....	81
4.3 Connecting Veteran Students to the Classroom .....	81
4.4 A Chance to Understand Veterans More In-Depth.....	81
Section 5. Into the College Classroom .....	83
5.1 Preparing Our Classes with Veteran Students in Mind .....	83

5.2. How to Achieve a Desired Outcome for Our Veteran Students.....	91
5.3 Gain Perspective of Veteran Students .....	94
5.4 Veteran Students as an Asset in the Classroom.....	96
Section 6. Resources for Instructors and Veteran Students .....	100
References .....	103

With knowledge at our fingertips in the form of the internet, it almost feels redundant to suggest researching military knowledge to help gain some perspective of veteran students. Of course, we should not think that reading some articles, books, blogs, or videos will give us all the information we need to effectively understand our veteran students, but it certainly cannot hurt. Items such as this guidebook, can be used as a stand-alone resource for basic guidance in understanding veteran students, or it can serve as the foundation of a teacher preparation course, or a module within a course. Another great way to gain some insight into any culture is through participation in cultural training. Instructors will benefit from cultural training by understanding the strengths and skills that are gained through different military service experiences. This guidebook is not intended to provide the cultural training that is being suggested here.

This guidebook is designed to provide practical suggestions and considerations for instructors in higher education who will have veteran students enter their classrooms. It is a mix of narrative stories from my own experiences, and researched information that contributes to the readability of the guidebook. The guidebook has been structured to provide information at a glance if needed, as well as provide insights of my lived experiences as a veteran student.

Sections 1-4 provide a background of information pertaining to veterans and military knowledge, veterans and higher education, socialization phases within organizations, and culturally responsive teaching. In section 5, the information is put together to provide suggestions on best practices for instructors who will have veterans in their classrooms. In section 6, a list of resources for instructors and veteran students is provided to support in the effort of helping veteran students be successful in higher education. I have decided to interject my personal experiences of my journey from youth to college graduate for several reasons. I have been able to connect the research of organizational socialization and culturally responsive teaching strategies to my success as a veteran student, and I feel my perspective can provide a unique insight into how the suggested ideas of the guidebook are helpful to veteran students.

The journey of becoming a veteran is a unique path for all who choose to serve in the military. For myself, the journey was one of survival, fear, and growth as an individual. As I reflected back on my journey from a young child, to troubled teenager, to Marine Corps veteran, to college graduate, I am now able to recognize the importance of so many distinct moments that have contributed to my success. The important moments are presented in *Italics* in this guidebook as a narrative tale of my own journey. Oftentimes the memories directly relate to the socialization process differences between military and higher education, and the concepts that instructors implemented that relate to culturally responsive

teaching. Other memories are included to give a deeper understanding of how my path was led by small impactful moments initiated by myself or others, and has helped me to socialize into both organizations of the military and higher education, but which all led to becoming a successful college graduate.

## Section 1. Veteran Students

This section will cover: who the people are who join the military, the specific recruiting efforts of each branch, the rank and pay grades of each branch, duty stations, the discharges a veteran can receive from the military, and deployments. This information is intended to provide instructors with some background information on military specific topics. My hope is that it will give instructors an opportunity to understand what type of organization veteran students are leaving when transitioning into higher education.

*I was 17 years old when I first made the decision to join the Marine Corps. It was a random thought that popped in my head as I was walking away from the second-high school that I was expelled from as a senior. At almost 18, I thought I knew everything. In a moment of reflection of what just happened, I thought to myself "I should try to join the military if I am ever going to succeed at anything." The Marine Corps seemed the only choice at the time. I walked away from the school grounds and straight to a gas station pay phone. Within 20 minutes of calling the local Marine Corps recruiting office, I was picked up at the gas station and brought to the office.*

*Everything was happening quickly. I revealed some legal troubles I was experiencing at the time, and the fact that I did not graduate high school. The recruiter and myself made a plan for me to take steps to become eligible to enlist. The recruiter helped to pay off my probation fees, and told me to register for night school so I could earn my high school diploma. Just a few short weeks after being released from probation, I was arrested again. This time, it would impact more than just myself. My recruiter felt let down, and told me that I would never be good enough to become a Marine. I cannot remember ever feeling as worthless as I did in that moment. I felt like I was never going to become a responsible, successful, person. I had failed again.*

*The next almost five years was a rollercoaster of emotional and physical obstacles for me. I had earned my GED, and did well enough to get a \$400 scholarship to a local community college. This little scholarship helped me make the decision to enroll in some college courses, and was a great start to what the future would hold. After my Marine recruiter told me I would not be able to join the Marine Corps, I had tried to join other military branches. They would not even talk to me after hearing of my past legal troubles and record of quitting on myself. I started a small business, but ultimately decided that lifestyle was not for me, so I picked up part time work at a local hotel. After a few months of working at this hotel, my*

*guardian angel, in the form of a high-ranking Marine Corps recruiter walked in. I engaged in a conversation with him that changed my life. This Marine made a promise to get me into the Marine Corps, and I made him a promise to visit him at his office and not lie to him about anything. Even after I was completely honest about my last attempt and legal trouble, he kept his promise, and I kept mine.*

Identifying who is and is not a veteran by looks alone is a difficult task. Unless of course, a veteran is wearing some artifact that identifies themselves as such. This remains true in higher education classrooms across our country as well. Veteran students in higher education classrooms do not always share the same story of what led to military service. Each veteran story is as unique as the experiences leading to where they are. These veterans share only two things for sure: they have served their country and have decided to enter higher education. As instructors who are attempting to positively impact this student population, gaining an understanding of who the veteran students in your class are is an important first step.

### **1.1 Who Joins the Military?**

The short answer is, someone who decided at one point in their life that military service was the best decision for them. There is a common myth that suggests the military is for the less fortunate, less educated, and troublemaking law breakers. The truth is, veterans come from all over the world, from all social classes, and for many reasons (Myers, 2020). Sometimes it is patriotism that draws a person into military service, sometimes it is the troublemakers, and sometimes it is the financial situation which helps push a person towards enlistment. One thing worth understanding as an instructor is the recruiting techniques used by each military branch, to attract a specific type of person. This will help provide a small insight into the veteran students in your classrooms.

### **1.2 Attracting a Specific Demographic During Recruiting Efforts**

*I had a poster on my wall for several months that depicted a Marine, with the most stoic facial expression covered with camouflage paint. He seemed to be staring through the poster as if he were proudly stating for all who see him "I am one of the few." He was confidently carrying a rifle with the look that he was on the attack. His camouflage uniform adorned a K-Bar military knife, and a neatly rolled up rope slung over his shoulder. On the bottom of the poster, was the single word MARINES.*

*There were many commercials playing on television at the time. All of the commercials for the Marine Corps had a different feel for me. One commercial that I still remember clearly, is one that involves a civilian who*

*is faced with a number of difficult obstacles that seem impossible to navigate. The man in the commercial knows that he needs to get through the obstacles to reach a sword that is placed on a platform like King Arthur's Excalibur. The sword needs to be reached in order to defeat a dragon of fire. The man was successful in reaching the sword and skillfully slayed the dragon with a few expertly conducted swings of the weapon. In the calm celebration of completing the mission, the man transforms from civilian to a Marine, complete with crisp Dress Blue Uniform and the famous Marine Corps NCO sword (Mameluke sword).*

The United States has a total of six (6) branches of military. They are The Marine Corps, Army, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, and Coast Guard. Each branch has a separate mission. The mission of each branch, could provide a glimpse into the type of person that might gravitate toward one branch over another. Importantly, each branch uses different communication and language to recruit an ideal personality type.

Each military branch has different slogans that represent their respective organizational structures and cultures. As organizational missions vary across the individual branches, the socialization processes must be exclusive to each branch as well. The first part of the socialization process occurs in the pre-entry or anticipatory phase. The pre-entry phase of military socialization may begin early in life when an individual has hopes of joining a specific branch. The individual may seek out knowledge about becoming a member of a particular branch through reading, networking, media, etc. When the first contact is made with a military recruiter, the process of the anticipatory stage may become more intense and things may seem to move faster. The recruiter has the responsibility to attract newcomers (hereon recruits) to their specific branch. It is important that recruits communicate to recruiters to gain an understanding of whether or not the specific branch (organization) is a good fit for them. Just as it is important for the recruiter to determine if the recruit would be a good fit to the organization. The branches of the United States Military have particular personality traits they are looking for to join their ranks.

In order to be successful, recruiters must understand who the target "customer" (potential recruit) is, reach that "customer", and offer that "customer" something that particular "customer" wants. As each branch has a unique mission that members are required to work towards, recruiting efforts are focused on attracting the most suitable personalities to contribute to the cause. This means that each branch will approach this task in different ways.

**Marine Corps.** The recruiting efforts of the Marine Corps are unique for several reasons. Although a department of the Navy, the Marine Corps has a

specific purpose and is recognized as its own branch with a unique mission. During recruiting efforts, the Marine Corps uses deliberate language that relies on reputation and intrigue. It is filled with imagery of overcoming stress and doubt. It urges someone to consider pushing themselves past any physical or mental barriers to find the courage held within. If you are “tough” enough to earn the title of Marine, the title is forever. The Marine Corps uses language in the recruiting efforts that resembles a challenge to those seeking membership. As if the Marine Corps was saying, “If you think you have what it takes, prove it to us for a chance to earn our title.” The Marine Corps recruiting guidance suggests that people who are considering joining the Marine Corps are more likely to have a higher sense of patriotism, and calling to military service. This sense of patriotism could be a result of many factors, but common factors include a family heritage of serving, a desire to be a part of a team, and a lifelong desire to join the military.

*I was not a particularly patriotic person before I joined the Marine Corps. I did not come from a lineage of military service members. I just knew that I needed to find some guidance in my life that I was missing. After joining the Marine Corps, I have found a strong sense of patriotism. I contribute this increased sense of patriotism to the socialization process of the Marine Corps. I became fully committed (institutionalized) to the Marine Corps because of the communication processes used in the organization. Cable et al. (2013) discussed how the goal of highly structured organizations is to use tactics of socialization that will remove any doubt about how a member should react and respond to institutional communication processes to include messages, values, and situations.*

**Army.** The Army uses a strategy of recruiting that offers a route to being a successful member of society from all the benefits and job skills one will learn during their military service. Commercials for the Army show Army basic training as a progression of accomplishments leading to one becoming “All you can be,” and being part of “An Army of One” (Mavor & Sackett, 2003). The advertising of the Army is meant to appeal to the youth who want something different, and want to achieve something more, but it does so in a more subtle manner. It does not address the aspects of being different than other branches, or appealing to the emotions of heroism and bravery (Mavor & Sackett, 2003).

**Air Force.** The Air Force recruits members through a sense of being different than other branches. The commercials tend to reach the youth who are not sure the military is a path they are interested in. The Air Force offers a transformative experience at a level above what the Army could offer. The Air Force wants potential members to recognize they are not ordinary with their

slogans such as, “Nothing you do is ordinary” and other similar phrases (Mavor & Sackett, 2003). The one that sticks in my memory is “Aim High.”

**Navy.** The Navy has a specific target for recruiting potential members as well. Mavor & Sackett (2003) identify the Navy strategies of recruiting as being geared towards youth with a desire to escape their current situations. By promising potential members a life that is anything but dull. One will travel the world and experience more things in a few short years than most people will do in an entire lifetime. The Navy implies that a new member will have the educational experiences of traditional college students with the training provided by the Navy.

As of the time of this writing, there is not very much information on how the Space Force will approach recruiting efforts. It has just recently been designated a U.S military branch.

### **1.3 Military Rank from Lowest to Highest**

The rank that a veteran achieved in the military will no doubt impact their perception of the military experience they had. For example, a servicemember who enlists into the military on a four-year contract and transitions out after the first enlistment, will have a different experience as far as rank achievement, responsibility, and overall time in leadership positions than a servicemember who serves multiple enlistments and retires after 20 or more years. The servicemember who has chosen to continue reenlisting will have an increased commitment to the organization and has been socialized as a member for greater periods of time. This greater period of time in the socialization process can contribute to a stronger sense of a person identifying with the organization. A person identifies with an organization when being a member of the organization becomes an accepted part of who the person is (Davis & Myers, 2012). The divergent experiences of a higher-ranking military member with multiple enlistments and a lower-ranking single contract (enlistment) servicemember contribute to the differing perspectives.

Below (see tables 1.1, 1.2) is a chart identifying the ranks and pay grades of each military branch. The enlisted pay grades are identified in the far-left corner with the letter “E” (enlisted), followed by a number 1-9. Officers have pay grades that have the letters “O” (Commissioned Officer) or “W” (Warrant Officer, if applicable) and numbers 1-10. The higher the number is, the more rank the service person holds. Time served does not directly relate to higher rank but some correlation does exist. Promotions to the next rank are influenced by many variables (including time in service) which are inconsistent across the branches and dependent on the ways in which an individual navigates their own

experiences. One thing that is consistent is the fact that with higher rank comes more responsibility and leadership roles. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 below, of U.S Military enlisted and officer pay grades and ranks are provided for the purpose of illuminating the perspectives of the veteran students through the understanding of the position (rank) that the veteran student held on active-duty. This knowledge can help to situate veteran students as nontraditional student population.

According to Pelliter, (2010) there are seven characteristics that are used to identify nontraditional students. Veteran students share a few of these characteristics including: delayed entry into higher education; (potential) part-time status; most likely working full-time, independent, and more likely to be a parent. All which have been identified as contributions to extended time to complete a degree, or departure from higher education. Understanding the factors that contribute to difficulties for nontraditional students, is helpful in recognizing the difficulties veteran students might experience in higher education. Most of the characteristics above are considered environmental characteristics of nontraditional students. In a study, Jeffreys (2007) found that students “perceived environmental factors to be most influential in supporting or restricting retention followed by institutional interaction and integration factors” (p.167).

**Table 1.1. Enlisted Military Ranks and Pay Grades**

Branch	Army	Marine Corps	Navy	Air Force	Coast Guard	Space Force
<b>Paygrade</b>						
<b>E-1</b>	Pvt	Private	Seaman Recruit	Airman Basic	Seaman Recruit	Airman Basic
<b>E-2</b>	Private	Private first-class	Seaman Apprentice	Airman	Seaman Apprentice	Airman
<b>E-3</b>	First Class	Lance Corporal	Seaman	Airman (AKA, Airman First Class)	Seaman	Airman First Class
<b>E-4</b>	Corporal/ Specialist	Corporal	Petty Officer 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	Senior Airman	Petty Officer 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class	Senior Airman
<b>E-5</b>	Sergeant	Sergeant	Petty Officer 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	Staff Sergeant	Petty Officer 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	Staff Sergeant
<b>E-6</b>	Staff Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Petty Officer 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Technical Sergeant	Petty Officer 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Technical Sergeant
<b>E-7</b>	Sergeant First Class	Gunnery Sergeant	Chief Petty Officer	Master Sergeant/ (First Sergeant role could be assigned from E-7 – E-9)	Chief Petty Officer	Master Sergeant
<b>E-8</b>	First Sergeant/ Master Sergeant	First Sergeant/ Master Sergeant	Senior Chief Petty Officer	Senior Master Sergeant	Senior Chief Petty Officer	Senior Master Sergeant
<b>E-9</b>	Sergeant Major/ Command Sergeant Major/ Sergeant Major of the Army	Sergeant Major/ Master Gunnery Sergeant/ Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps	Master Chief Petty Officer/ Command Master Chief Petty Officer/ Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy	Chief Master Sergeant/ Command Master Chief/ Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force	Master Chief Petty Officer/ Fleet/Command Master Petty Officer/ Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard	Chief Master Sergeant/ Command Chief Master Sergeant/ Chief Master Sergeant of the Space Force

**Table 1.2. Warrant and Commissioned Officer Military Ranks and Pay Grades**

Branch	Army	Marine Corps	Navy	Air Force	Coast Guard	Space Force
<b>Paygrade</b>						
<b>W-1</b>	Warrant Officer 1	Warrant Officer	Warrant Officer 1	<b>N/A</b>	Warrant Officer 1	<b>N/A</b>
<b>W-2</b>	Warrant Officer 2	Chief Warrant Officer 2	Warrant Officer 2	<b>N/A</b>	Warrant Officer 2	<b>N/A</b>
<b>W-3</b>	Warrant Officer 3	Chief Warrant Officer 3	Warrant Officer 3	<b>N/A</b>	Warrant Officer 3	<b>N/A</b>
<b>W-4</b>	Warrant Officer 4	Chief Warrant Officer 4	Warrant Officer 4	<b>N/A</b>	Warrant Officer 4	<b>N/A</b>
<b>W-5</b>	Master Warrant Officer 5	Chief Warrant Officer 5	Master Warrant Officer	<b>N/A</b>	Master Warrant Officer	<b>N/A</b>
<b>O-1</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	Ensign	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	Ensign	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant
<b>O-2</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant	1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant	Lieutenant, Junior Grade	1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant	Lieutenant, Junior Grade	1 <sup>st</sup> Lieutenant
<b>O-3</b>	Captain	Captain	Lieutenant	Captain	Lieutenant	Captain
<b>O-4</b>	Major	Major	Lieutenant Commander	Major	Lieutenant Commander	Major
<b>O-5</b>	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander	Lieutenant Colonel
<b>O-6</b>	Colonel	Colonel	Captain	Colonel	Captain	Colonel
<b>O-7</b>	Brigadier General	Brigadier General	Rear Admiral (Commodore)	Brigadier General	Rear Admiral (Commodore)	Brigadier General
<b>O-8</b>	Major General	Major General	Rear Admiral (Upper Half)	Major General	Rear Admiral (Upper Half)	Major General
<b>O-9</b>	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral	Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral	Lieutenant General
<b>O-10</b>	Army Chief of Staff (General)	Commandant of the Marine Corps (General)	Chief of Naval Operations (Admiral)	Air Force Chief of Staff (General)	Commandant of the Coast Guard (Admiral)	
<b>Special</b>	General of the Army	<b>N/A</b>	Fleet Admiral	General of the Air Force	Fleet Admiral	

## 1.4 Duty Station and Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)

America's armed forces have "bases" across the globe. Bases range in size from small to large, and for the most part, it is atypical for a member to choose the base or duty station of their choice. The military will send the enlistee where they need them but a few exceptions exist in the form of enlistment incentives. The duty station is the physical geographical location where military members are assigned to serve a finite period while on active duty. All bases are duty stations for some military members, but not all duty stations are bases. Duty stations can be located on ships, at embassies across the world, in cities across the country (recruiting stations), and even in universities across the country where military officer training programs exist. The duty station has an impact on the experiences one will have in the military. Imagine the contrast of experiences an Army Soldier stationed in Fort Irwin would have compared to a Marine stationed in Okinawa, Japan. Fort Irwin is in the middle of a California Desert, and Okinawa is a small island with beautiful coastline outside of the country. Few factors matter more than an individual's MOS in influencing where they are stationed, or assigned. In the Navy and Coast Guard, they are known as "rates," but a MOS is simply a description of the job one does in the military. Each branch will have MOSs that are unique to that branch. These MOSs will play a role in where someone gets stationed. If administrative personnel are needed at one base, and not the other, then the needs of the organization send the individual where they are needed.

*With the route I took to finally be able to enlist into the Marines, there were a few enlistment options that were not available to me. Enlistment options include such things as guaranteed Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), duty station preference, and other things such as enlistment bonuses. When I first realized that I was going to be able to go to bootcamp to try and earn the title of Marine, I was trying to enlist as a reservist so that I could continue school and for the most part, the life that I was used to. After communicating with my recruiter about my limited ability to request specific desired options, I chose to enlist into active duty on an "open contract which meant I would be given a MOS that the Marine Corps assigned me, based on their needs and my qualifications. I didn't realize it at the time, but this was part of the communication strategies used in my (personal) socialization process from the Marine Corps. This communication experience did impact my expectations during the anticipatory phase of joining the Marine Corps. I knew that I would be required to adapt to the organization and the organization was not going to adapt to me.*

*After successfully graduating bootcamp and earning the title, Marine, the next step in the training was Marine Combat Training (MCT). It was near the end of MCT when the open contract Marines were told what their MOS would be. When they called my name, I was told that I would be “Amphibious Assault, AAV, Amtrack, Camp Pendleton, California.” I was completely thrown off guard. I had no idea the Marine Corps had anything to do with “Amtrack trains.” The image I had in my head for the next few days of travel from the East Coast to the West Coast, was of me working on trains for the next four years. I could not have been more wrong.*

*Along with a few other Marines from MCT, I arrived at the receiving building on Camp Pendleton sometime during the night. We were met by two Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and were taken across the base to the schoolhouse for Amphibious Assault Vehicle crewman. It was not a train! It was a big 26-ton amphibious vehicle that helps transport the infantry Marines from ship to shore and back, while also providing combat support during missions ashore. I remember questioning “how will I ever learn how to operate this thing?” It turned out to be an amazing job full of challenges, dangers, and a community that was close knit and full of pride. It did not take me long to feel like I was fully accepted as a newcomer to this organization.*

## **1.5 Discharge Status**

Ultimately, military service is a contractual agreement requiring a commitment to serve for a finite period of time. Regardless if a member reenlists for more “contracts” (terms), a known date of discharge is usually known. There are situations that occur which cause the transition from the military to be expedited. An example is, service members who decide to disobey rules and regulations and are discharged prior to their contracts end of service date. Ultimately every person who enlists into the military will get out through a process called, discharge. There are eight types of discharge conditions that a veteran may receive based on individual circumstances: 1.) honorable, 2.) general under honorable, 3.) other than honorable, 4.) bad conduct, 5.) dishonorable, 6.) medical separation, 7.) early entry separation, and 8.) convenience of the government separation (Wallace, 2019).

A discharge date represents the day of transition (planned exit) from the military. A mix of emotions ranging from excitement for the future and a concern of leaving the familiar role within the organization is experienced by many who are transitioning out of an organization on a predetermined date (Davis & Myers, 2012). This is especially true when transitioning from an organization in which an individual has identified themselves as a member. In the military, members tend to identify with the organization. An example is how members in the Marine Corps take ownership and are proud to be a Marine. Marines do not typically say

“I am in the Marine Corps,” they typically say “I am a Marine.” It becomes part of who you are. Mentioned earlier, but worth repeating here, a person identifies with an organization when being a member of the organization becomes part of who they are (Davis & Myers, 2012). The discharge date is as important to a transitioning military member as the discharge status they receive. Discharge status is annotated on a veteran’s DD214 (Government form of release from active duty) and is important in determining what benefits a veteran is or is not eligible for after military service.

## 1.6 Deployments

Although a majority of veterans have been on a deployment during their enlistment, few have not. Deployments are periods of time when military members are away from the home base and working in other geographic areas across the globe. Deployments can vary greatly between branches, MOS, location, task, mission, and duration. One thing to keep in mind about the veteran students we will see, is that the newest era of veterans has had a different experience serving than any era since World War II. The veterans of today’s era were more likely required to deploy to combat zones more frequently due to the smaller numbers of our all-volunteer force. Smaller numbers of personnel available, and greater numbers of personnel needed to deploy, means more deployment rotations for the military members who served during the most recent wars of Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom [OEF] (Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on the Initial Assessment of Readjustment Needs of Military Personnel, Veterans, and Their Families, 2010). Over the last couple of decades deployments can be described as either combat, or noncombat. The difference in these two types of deployments is in the missions that the unit is tasked with. As the task differs for the units deploying, the members of the different units will have divergent experiences, thus, creating unique perspectives for instructors to consider when creating a culturally responsive classroom with veteran students.

During a noncombat deployment being away from family for an extended period of time is expected. During this time, the tasks and activities completed range from training, to visiting and exploring faraway lands.

*In my experience, my noncombat deployments allowed me to train with other military units across the world, experience local cultures in different parts of the world, see the sun rise and fall in the ocean from a ship, and spend time on some of the world’s most beautiful beaches. I will admit, training does take up the majority of the time, but that is just part of the experience. It is a welcomed experience after having deployed to a combat zone.*

A combat deployment is exactly what it sounds like. It is a period of time that a military unit is scheduled to participate in combat activities, during an active conflict. These deployments also range in duration, especially between the different branches. It is more common for the Army to deploy for longer duration than other branches. Not to say other branches do not deploy for long periods, it is just more common within the Army. During a combat deployment time is spent training for upcoming missions, patrolling the area, aiding in humanitarian missions, guarding bases, and general administrative housekeeping tasks to ensure the ability to complete any mission that gets delegated to the unit.

Understanding the different types of deployments that veterans have been on can provide insight into the various cultural experiences in which veteran students have been exposed. Not only the culture of military itself, but exposure to a variety of ethnic cultures as well. Instructors can use the strengths developed from these life experiences of veteran students to help student achievement (for all) in our classrooms through an approach to culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). In fact, in a CRP focused learning environment, Richards et al., (2007) stated, the “strengths [that] students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement” (Richards et al., 2007, p. 64). Instructors improve student achievement when they learn to view the world through the perspectives of students, and allow students to share from their own perspectives formed by lived experiences. When students feel like they can connect to the curriculum from familiar standpoints, it helps them feel more connected to the learning experience.

## **Section 2. Veteran Students into Higher Education**

This section discusses why there is a rise in veterans attending higher education, what campus resource is most valuable to veteran students, and discuss how different organizations assist newcomers into the organization. This section is brief and provides an explanation to the increase in student veteran populations in higher education and some of the ways higher education is preparing to socialize this demographic of students.

### **2.1 Higher Numbers of Veterans Seeking Education**

In 2008, the U.S. Government passed the Post 9/11 Veteran's Educational Assistance Act (Post 9/11 GI Bill). The Post 9/11 GI Bill makes the decision to attend college immediately after leaving the military more enticing. In fact, with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan coming to an end, the U.S is seeing a rise in student veteran populations that have not been seen since World War II (Dillard & Yu, 2016). The bill provides educational benefits for up to 36 months that help pay for tuition, books, fees, and also provides the veteran student a monthly stipend to help offset the cost of attending college. What is not in place with the new bill, is a specific requirement for an entity to be assigned the role of helping a veteran cut through the red tape of accessing the benefit. Enough challenges have been identified in accessing this benefit, that many organizations have put a resource in place that helps with this process, and more.

### **2.2 A Valuable On-Campus Resource for Information**

Veteran Success Centers (VSC), or similarly functioning resource centers have been recognized as an effective resource to have on a college campus (Kratochvil, 2014). The VSC serves as a one-stop shop for all information related to veterans seeking higher education. VSC staff are experts in veteran benefit processes related to education (and other services if needed). This is the place a veteran can receive help getting intended classes certified for approval, information for using any of the different benefit programs in which the veteran is eligible for, and a place where veterans can socialize with other veterans. The VSC is also a place where instructors can go to receive information related to veterans or the military in general. The VSC is a great resource for any questions about available programs, or resources that can be accessed to improve veteran student success. Although, a campus VSC is an excellent resource program to help veterans and instructors at the campus level, not many programs are geared towards ensuring veterans in the classroom feel a sense of belonging (O'Herrin, 2011; Blackwell- Starnes, 2018), which is where instructors are imperative.

### **2.3 Organizations Helping Newcomers Feel Welcomed**

A veteran who transitions between organizations (i.e., military to higher education) will experience some challenges when we consider the socialization tactics found in different types of organizations. Higher education is a business. Business organizations have an incentive to help newcomers feel like a member of the organization. They are spending money to “train” new members to reach a desired outcome. The desired outcome could be any place along a continuum of possibilities and may produce a member who is more institutionalized or more individualized (this will be covered in greater detail in Section 3).

Colleges are increasingly taking steps to help veterans transition into higher education. College campuses can offset expenses of providing transition assistance by implementing veteran friendly recruiting practices which can bring in guaranteed tuition dollars via programs such as the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Attracting veterans using the Post 9/11 GI Bill is worth the consideration of successful programming and socialization processes for higher education. Most campus programs are a macro-level consideration compared to the micro-level consideration of what veterans experience in higher education classrooms. Once a college helps a veteran enroll, register, and pay for classes, the veteran’s next hurdle is when they enter a classroom, seemingly all alone. As part of the overall organization, higher education classrooms are an important step in the socialization process. Socialization processes are present in every organization. In higher education, the process will look different than the military organization they have just transitioned from.

### **Section 3. Becoming Socially Accepted in An Organization**

Each organization has a socialization process that newcomers experience in their journey of becoming an accepted member of the organization. The purpose of socialization processes is summarized by researchers as the adopting of values, norms, rules, and practices that guide the culture of an organization (Howe & Hinderaker, 2018), the transmission of an organization's culture to a newcomer that enables the newcomer to accept the organization's behavior (Cable et al., 2013), and the primary means of adapting newcomers to new positions and roles within an organization (Chao et al., 1994). The term organizational socialization was first described to explain the resulting outcomes of experiences that individuals have when becoming a member of an organization. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) described organizational socialization as "the process by which one is taught and learns 'the ropes' of a particular organizational role" (p. 3). The socialization process involves a series of phases leading up to a newcomer becoming an accepted and assimilated member of an organization.

In this section, I will first discuss the two responses that each member will reach in some capacity depending on how organizational leadership approaches the socialization process. I will then discuss the three phases of the socialization process: the anticipatory phase, the encounter phase, and the assimilation phase. I will also present a juxtaposition of each phase as I experienced it in the military and in higher education.

#### **3.1 The Desired Response of New Members**

A custodial response is a conforming (institutionalized) response where a newcomer to an organization accepts the already present knowledge and tasks associated with an organizational role. An example is provided by Dalenberg & Buijs (2013) explaining the communicative tactics that can lead to an institutional response of a newcomer, "institutionalized socialization newcomers have access to structured forms of modeling and social support; they undergo common learning experiences as part of a cohort (collective), by clearly defined (formal), sequenced, and timed training and orientation activities (fixed)" (p.100). The goal of the military socialization process is an institutionalized response.

An innovative (individualized) response is described as a nonconforming stance to the predefined assumed knowledge and tasks of an organizational role (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). An example of an innovative response is a newcomer who joins an organization is given the independence to find a better way to achieve results or improve a process. There are six tactical dimensions

that are expressed as substantial in determining the degree a newcomer to an organization will respond as either custodial, or innovative.

Organizational members are responsible for the communication that does or does not happen to encourage a certain desired outcome. An organization may decide not to implement any formal socialization process. If there is no process implemented, an organization has less ability to influence the outcome toward a specific desired one. As instructors, our classrooms are important pieces of the organization. Therefore, the ways that we communicate during the phases of socialization will lead to one of the two different desired outcomes of either custodial (institutionalized) or innovative (individualized). Table 3.1 provides a summary description of socialization tactics and potential outcomes for clarification. The example outcomes listed in the table are possible outcomes from my own perspective, not absolute outcomes. Veteran students have been socialized to the custodial outcome while serving in the military. By understanding how these students will experience the socialization processes of the military and higher education differently, we will look at each phase of the socialization process.

**Table 3.1. Summary Description of Socialization Tactics**

Socialization Tactics/ Communicative Strategies	Description
Collective vs. individual	Newcomers receive common experiences as a group vs. receiving individual experiences.
Formal vs. informal	Using specific methods and materials to train newcomers for roles while separating newcomers from other members (i.e., new hire training) vs. immediate inclusion with existing members with no specified training requirement (i.e., sink or swim).
Sequential vs. random	A progression of learning expected tasks in a sequence, vs. no defined order of task learning expected.
Fixed vs. variable	A specified time to progress through the socialization steps vs. no specific time required.
Serial vs. disjunctive	Experienced organizational members serving as role models/mentors to newcomers vs. no role models/mentors provided.
Investiture vs. divestiture	Provide newcomers with what they need to succeed in the role as an individual while maintaining identity vs. stripping away personal ideas and beliefs and replacing with values of the organization.
<b>Organizational Outcomes Based on the Communicative Strategies Used</b>	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div data-bbox="394 1125 805 1247" style="background-color: #4a698c; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px;"><b>Custodial Response</b></div> <div data-bbox="469 1268 730 1703" style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Collective</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Formal</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Sequential</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Fixed</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Serial</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Divestiture</div> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div data-bbox="764 1260 906 1717" style="background-color: #4a698c; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px; writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">T A C T I C S</div> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <div data-bbox="876 1125 1287 1247" style="background-color: #4a698c; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 5px;"><b>Innovative Response</b></div> <div data-bbox="927 1268 1188 1703" style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Individual</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Informal</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Random</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Variable</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Disjunctive</div> <div style="background-color: #d9d9d9; padding: 5px; border-radius: 5px;">Investiture</div> </div> </div> </div>	
<p>Informed by Van Maanen, J., &amp; Schein, E. H. (1979). Toward a theory of organizational socialization. In B. M. Staw (Ed.), <i>Research in organizational behavior</i> (pp. 209-264). Greenwich, CT: JAI.</p>	

### 3.2 A “Not So” Simple Model

A simple model developed by Frederic M. Jablin suggested four phases of assimilation during the socialization process of an organization (Kramer and Miller, 2014). The four phases are: 1.) the anticipatory socialization, 2.) encounter, 3.) metamorphosis, and 4.) exit. Jablin sometimes referred to the encounter and metamorphosis phases together and labeled it assimilation (Jablin, 2001; Kramer and Miller, 2014). These phases are present in all organizations. The communication that occurs during each of the phases is important to the assimilation of a new member.

### 3.3 The Anticipation of Joining an Organization

You can probably remember a time when you were applying for college or a job, maybe even the position you hold right now. Remember the feelings associated with what it would mean to be a part of whatever organization you were hoping to get into. In addition to the feelings, you probably participated in more formal processes, such as researching the organization to see if it was a fit for you and was a place you would be happy to be a member of. You might have used various resources for information including internet, industry articles, networking, visiting the organization in person, and the list goes on. Maybe this time period was a stressful time of anxiousness or nervousness that made the anticipation a little stressful. This time period is identified as what organizational communication scholars refer to as the anticipatory phase of the socialization process. In other words, this phase is the time leading up to, but before becoming a member of a specific organization. For example, a hopeful college student researching several college campuses and deciding which ones to apply to. Maybe it can be represented by the research a person might do, when deciding if they would like to work for a particular organization. Collectively, this can all be described as the anticipatory phase of the socialization process. The anticipatory phase of joining the military and higher education is vastly different.

*After realizing that joining the Marine Corps was actually going to be a reality for me, I was filled with excitement. I was not nervous, but I was acting as if I had already earned the title, simply because I had signed my contract and had a shipping date to bootcamp. I wore my Marine Corps recruiting shirt everywhere I went. I enjoyed when people asked me if I was going to bootcamp, and I felt them look at me differently. It felt as if people were thinking, “Wow, he is actually going to try to be a Marine.” It felt like I had already achieved something great! I had a rude awakening coming in the near future. I was shipping out to bootcamp in just a few weeks.*

*Almost every day, I would go to the recruiter's office just to hangout and ask questions of what to expect in bootcamp. I was able to ride with some of the recruiter assistants to run errands for the office. I already felt accepted into the organization, and I had not even proved myself in bootcamp yet. This short time spent in the office allowed me to feel much better about the decision to commit to an active-duty contract. It was as if I had found a place that I belonged, and I had not even begun the journey!*

In the military, the anticipatory phase includes meeting with a recruiter, and hanging out with other recruited people who have decided to join a certain branch, but have not been shipped off to bootcamp or recruit training yet. This practice in the recruiting efforts help to create a sense of organizational community and allegiance early on. These individuals are known as "poolees," (in the Marine Corps) and usually have already joined the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) meaning they have sworn in and have received a shipping date (to basic training, recruit training, bootcamp) anywhere up to a year late. This is where the future recruits will experience part of the anticipatory phase that is significantly different than the anticipatory phase of going to a particular higher education organization. In the DEP program, poolees join other poolees and the recruiter for "meetings" and "training" periodically. During these meetings poolees learn the most basic information to prepare them to succeed in military service. This includes things such as drill, physical fitness, jargon, knowledge, and military etiquette. Of course, the DEP program is just a small part of the anticipatory phase. It also is not a requirement that each future recruit must participate in. It is highly encouraged to join the "poolee functions," but is not mandatory. The anticipatory phase of socialization in higher education varies and has a lesser defined pattern across different institutions.

*I was nervous about getting out of the Marine Corps. I was used to the life I had been living for so long and was even scared that I might not be successful as a civilian. I knew I wanted to go to school, but I was not sure exactly what I wanted to major in, I only knew that I wanted a degree. I researched local colleges, majors, careers, and everything I could think of related to going to school when I got out. I researched various degrees and careers almost anytime I was able to. When I was deployed or in the field for training (often for extended periods of time) I was not able to research or attend any orientation or campus visits. This limited my ability to truly find the right fit of school for me. I was simply being pushed towards a certain school based on geographical location of where I wanted to be, and the degrees that the local college in the area offered.*

*I found a program that would allow me to combine my passion of cooking, food, and desire to earn a bachelor's degree. The program had a*

*matriculation agreement to a well-known 4-year state university. I thought I had found the perfect fit for me. To be honest, I never once considered the idea that I would not be accepted to the school that had this program. I just assumed anyone could attend community college regardless of their past educational performance. Once again, I made the decision to enroll into a program that I did not fully understand. After a quick visit to the campus and speaking with the Veteran Service Coordinator for the school, I was informed that I had to declare a major to use the educational benefits of the Post 9/11 GI Bill. I registered for classes and chose my major in a span of 10-minutes, without any advice or guidance about my potential to do well in the chosen major, or even if any of my previous credits would transfer at all. I only knew that I had to declare a major to use the educational benefit. My anticipatory phase of joining an organization of higher education was rushed and based more on receiving the financial assistance that comes with using the Post 9/11 GI Bill, than truly taking the time to research what I was getting into.*

The anticipatory phase in higher education institutions include activities such as campus visits, application deadlines, waiting for acceptance letters, researching the school and alumni, etc. An individual may very well experience similar emotions of anxiousness and nervousness as a military poolee who is preparing to serve their country. The commitment to good grades or to extracurriculars in high school that can make an application stronger, is part of the anticipatory phase through comments such as “this would look great on a college application.” Some schools have certain criteria for applying to their school. Some schools require orientations, or campus visits, or interviews with admission representatives. The way each organization approaches this time period of a newcomer joining, can have an impact on the outcome of the newcomer. Oftentimes, when veterans are newly transitioning to higher education, they are unable to experience the anticipatory phase of joining an organization in the same manner as traditional college students might be able to. This is because military service takes priority over everything. It is how military organizational culture requires it to be. A military member is on contract until the date he is discharged. If a transitioning military member is on deployment immediately prior to transitioning, it is difficult to experience the anticipatory phase of becoming a member of higher education organizations in the same manner as other traditional college students are able to. If unable to experience the anticipatory phase that is more common among traditional students, veteran students will end up in our classrooms trying to navigate the environment, and potentially experiencing aspects of the anticipatory phase and the encounter phase simultaneously.

### 3.4 “I’m Here! Now What?”

After a newcomer is formally invited to join an organization, the individual begins the encounter phase. This is when a new member first begins to engage and interact with other organizational members. Often, this is where a person determines if their expectations (determined during the anticipatory phase) meet the reality of what they are encountering day-to-day.

*I arrived on Parris Island in a white passenger van with about 6 other people trying to earn the title of Marine. Our trip from Jacksonville, Florida was filled with nervous excitement and laughter. We stopped at a buffet to eat what our driver jokingly referred to as “our last meal”. Our spirits were high. When we reached the gates of Parris Island, the feeling began to change. It was getting dark, and the rain began pouring down as if on cue. Our driver drove up and down many dead-end roads and parking lots as if he had never made the trip before. After about twenty minutes of getting “lost” we arrived at the receiving barracks. It was still raining very hard, and now the sky was complete darkness. Our van door opened up, and a Drill Instructor gave us some orders that I did not fully hear because I was startled by how intimidating this Drill Instructor was. We did not get told to stand on the yellow footprints, but were told to “stand single file with your nose on that hatch,” “GET OFF MY VAN.” Welcome to processing. Life is about to change forever!*

In the military the assimilation phase might occur during the DEP program but is more likely to truly begin the first day of bootcamp. All of the preparing for success in bootcamp is abruptly met with Drill Instructors yelling and screaming orders. It is meant to be overwhelming. It is meant to feel like a culture shock. Meeting with the recruiters every once in a while, when in the DEP program was only a taste of what a recruit will experience. The individual arriving at bootcamp understands this is something that every member of this organization has been through, and this is their time to prove they can make it. In the military, a common military phrase among individuals undergoing training is “attrition is the mission.” This is not an official saying or guidance, but it provides insight to the feelings shared by the members going through the experience. It feels as though an individual is being told that they “are not worthy to be in the organization and so it must be proven that you are worthy, before we will accept you.” In the military, the organization is not receiving money for your membership. Instead, they are trying to weed out the members who will not benefit and contribute to the organization. Thus, the encounter phase in the military is intentionally different than other organizations—it’s a balance between Darwinian strategies and community building.

In higher education the initial encounter phase can be seen as the time acceptance letters begin arriving and registration dates are posted. For instance, there is move-in week, first day of classes, rush week, and freshman orientation. The first steps onto a college campus are filled with moments of comparing expectations with reality. This time period includes finding ones way through the maze of responsibilities that come with a commitment to higher education. In this organization, attrition is not the goal. The goal is to provide the necessary support to help students remain in good standing and complete their education through a degree. Ultimately, operating as a business, higher education institutions are earning money from tuition costs, so it makes sense to aim for retention of members.

*The last time I was on a college campus before January of 2014, I was that misguided early twenties kid aimlessly taking classes to explore different options. My life was completely different back before becoming a Marine. School was not something I felt I needed to accomplish. It was just a means to an ability to say I was “doing something with my life.”*

*My first attempt at higher education was all a facade just to make myself feel good about my track record of being unsuccessful in everything I did. This time felt different. I remember thinking that I have to be successful now, because I am a husband, a father, and a marine. I knew that I had changed while in the Marines. The change was for the better, I could feel that with every breath I took. I was more determined to make this experience of higher education work. I felt so intensely focused on being successful that there was nothing that was going to stop me. Nothing.*

*But something started to happen. I slowly started feeling the fire extinguish and the desire to be successful fade away. I would be sitting in class and find myself wishing I was still in the Marine Corps. I would daydream of the good and bad times that I had. I would vividly remember moments of deployments where I thought I might not come home. I would replay visions in my head of moments that I could not even determine if they were real. I did not want to sit in these classes with these “kids” that had no idea what I had been through, but I wanted them to know that I was different, I was a Marine, I am proud of what I have done, and I won’t apologize for the assertive style I carried myself with. I was trying so hard to become just a student in college. This was my second semester back to school. I was still trying to see how reality was meeting my expectations.*

*I just wanted to do what I needed to do to get a degree. I began to feel like I was just going through the motions. Add this feeling to the new overwhelming feeling of inadequately being able to provide for my family*

*who was counting on me, I saw an opportunity to release myself from the responsibilities that were expected of me as a college student and a part-time worker. I told my boss I would give the company a full year of dedicated work as I took time off of school and focused on what could have become a career for me. I was trying to run away from something. I wasn't sure what it was, but it felt familiar and new all at the same time. I felt like I was giving up, but I also felt like I needed to take a break from school. I needed to focus on something different, and I saw work as an opportunity to escape from a reality I did not feel ready to take on. This is how my encounter phase into higher education after my military transition was. I almost decided I would not ever attempt higher education again. I felt defeated.*

At some point, each new member in an organization begins to feel as if they belong (or not). The member starts accepting the organization for what it is, regardless of the communicative techniques used to socialize newcomers. In the military, a member begins to feel like they belong to the organization at different moments. For some, it could be when graduating bootcamp, or when they check in to their first unit. For others, it could be when they are promoted to a certain rank, or are granted some supervisory role. Maybe, it could be a small moment of experiencing comradery, or motivation, or sense of pride. This moment can be identified differently by each member, and some might not ever reach this phase of socialization. The ones who never reach this phase, are most likely discharged early (e.g., dishonorable discharge or other than honorable discharge) or given some menial job tasks that prohibit any sense of belonging. The ones who reach this phase have reached what communication scholars identify as, the metamorphosis phase of assimilation.

*As I was walking up to the company office of my first duty station (excluding bootcamp and MOS training) in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, I remember thinking how incredible the feeling was. I was dressed in my Dress "Alphas" green uniform, carrying two seabags full of everything I owned at the time. My possessions included everything that was issued to me in bootcamp, and one pair of jeans, one pair of shorts, two collared polo style shirts, and one pair of running shoes. I was dripping sweat, and had a nervous feeling of excitement. "I made it," I was thinking. I am a Marine in the "Fleet." I was a little premature on the idea that I was already an accepted member in the organization.*

*The first few days were spent checking into my barracks room, meeting my platoon, and getting settled in. Within one week's time, I went from thinking I was premature about already belonging, to absolutely knowing that I had found the organization for me. I had never before felt so much*

*like I was where I needed to be. I fully accepted the idea that I was to be a Marine first and foremost in everything that I did. I was “institutionalized” and I loved it!!*

In higher education, there is also a subjective moment in time that a member feels like they are accepted and a part of the organization. In this phase a member will begin to feel more at ease with the expectations that are given to them by instructors. There is a confidence that is seen among members in this phase. These members might be seen at the tutoring center helping other students, or actively participating in clubs and other campus programs. It might include being more involved in class discussions. One might be able to identify these students by the way they interact with peers and faculty on campus. Regardless of what a member is engaged in during this metamorphosis phase of socialization, the individual feels like they belong and are accepted in the organization.

*I had a few good experiences in my education journey. I remember the moment I reached a point of feeling that I belonged. It was during a moment of reflection on my journey and just a few weeks before I was going to walk across a stage to receive my bachelor’s degree. I have been blessed with some very good instructors over the years. Some have positively impacted me much more than others. In this moment of gratitude and reflection, I realized I belonged in higher education. I enjoyed being in the environment and did not want it to end. I applied to graduate school with the hopes of continuing to feel like I had a place where I belonged.*

Reaching the stage of metamorphosis in higher education was a long road. It was the communication of particular instructors that led to my sense of acceptance of my membership in the classrooms of higher education. I was fortunate to find instructors who understood how to engage with me. They were able to find ways to include me and my experiences into the classroom discussion. They challenged me in the ways I needed to be challenged. They did not let me get away with not doing my best. They took their time to make me feel like I belonged in class. The communication used from the most effective instructors, led to my feelings of belonging to the whole community of the organization, but it started in the classroom. They really were able to respond to my cultural identity of a veteran, and encourage my success.

**Table 3.4. Summary Description of Assimilation During the Socialization Process**

<b>Three (3) Phases of Assimilation During the Socialization Process</b>		
Anticipatory	Encounter/ Metamorphosis	Exit/ Disengagement
The anticipatory phase is characterized by the communicative moments prior to joining an organization. These moments can span from early childhood to any moment prior to officially joining the organization.	A new member is formally invited to join an organization. When a new member determines if their expectations are met. Progresses from being a new but not fully accepted member to a sense of belonging	Usually refers to a known moment of upcoming exit from an organization. The communicative moments in this phase contribute to how the member who is exiting and the members who are remaining interact and ultimately feel about the exit.
<b>Examples in Context</b>		
<b>Military Examples</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching various branches of military to identify which branch is the best fit for an individual</li> <li>• Speaking with current or previous members about their experience</li> <li>• Visiting a recruiter's office seeking information about joining a specific branch</li> <li>• Statements like, "I want to join the Army when I graduate"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduating from bootcamp</li> <li>• Checking into the first unit for duty</li> <li>• Participating in a particular event or experience (combat, field training exercise, etc.)</li> </ul> <p><i>*Could occur at different moments for each member or even not all</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of service contract (EAS)</li> <li>• Retirement</li> <li>• Medically separated</li> <li>• Any discharge</li> <li>• Checking out of military unit</li> <li>• Military gear return</li> <li>• Attending Transition Assistance Programs (TAP)</li> <li>• Receiving DD-214 (signed discharge form)</li> </ul>
<b>Higher Education Examples</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committing to good grades to help with college acceptance</li> <li>• Doing specific tasks because they "would look great on a college application"</li> <li>• Committing to high sports performance in hopes of receiving a scholarship to college</li> <li>• Visiting college campuses to tour the campus</li> <li>• Speaking with current or previous members about their experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending orientation</li> <li>• Receiving acceptance letters</li> <li>• Move-in week</li> <li>• Registering for classes</li> <li>• Club rush week</li> <li>• Becoming more active on campus</li> <li>• Participating more in classroom discussions</li> <li>• Graduation Preparation</li> </ul> <p><i>* Could occur at different moments for each member or even not all</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final exam preparations during last term</li> <li>• Job searching</li> <li>• Graduation</li> </ul>

## **Section 4. Culturally Responsive Teaching in the College Classroom**

Culturally responsive teaching might conjure up some visuals of a classroom filled with a diverse group of students from various races and ethnic backgrounds. In reality, the word “culturally” means more than race and ethnic background. Culture has been defined in multiple ways, but McDaniel et. al (2006) provided a definition for culture that simplifies the meaning of culture as being the rules for “living and functioning in society” (p. 10), and is context dependent. It is essential to understand and apply these rules to be functionally effective, or otherwise accepted. Culture is something that does not have to be static. It can be learned and become something different. For example, cultures in organizations can be drastically different from one another. These are subcultures that exist in all organizations. Take the cultures created through processes already discussed in the military and higher education institutions across the country.

### **4.1 Considering Culture in the Classroom**

Thinking about cultures through the broader lens can be highly effective as an instructor who is preparing to teach a class. The idea is to be responsive to the unique perspectives that students bring to the classroom, otherwise known as culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). Researchers further describe CRP as considering the cultural characteristics, life experiences, and unique perspectives of each student as a means of teaching them more effectively (Gay, 2002). There are several key elements to consider when preparing to use the concepts of CRP. These elements include: gaining knowledge of various cultures, including related content in the curriculum, building a caring classroom, communicating across cultures, and responding to diverse delivery of education (Gay, 2002). The commitment to use these elements will help build a classroom that is welcoming, comfortable, challenging, and inclusive for all students, from all cultural backgrounds, including the veteran students in your class. I will expand on these elements in the “putting it all together” chapter.

It is probably no surprise to learn that each veteran can bring a unique perspective of lived experience into a college classroom. Because the cumulative experiences of each veteran are impacted by variables such as branch of service, MOS, deployment type, etc., it might feel like an insurmountable task to implement a plan that can take the student veteran’s cultural experience into consideration. Being aware that other cultural experiences exist is a first step to identifying strategies that can be used to gain a better understanding of military culture. Understanding our influence as instructors on the classroom climate is important also.

## **4.2 Considering the Classroom Climate**

The instructor sets the climate of the classroom. The climate of the classroom influences students (Simonds & Cooper, 2011). A positive social climate includes a mutual trust between instructors and students, an instructor's use of motivational and encouragement techniques, and a fairness for including students' participation in class (Geršicová, 2016). Everything said or done (i.e., verbal and nonverbal communication) in a particular classroom environment contributes to the overall climate of that class. Creating a classroom climate that aids in the learning process is a "critical component of preparation for culturally responsive teaching" (Gay 2002, p. 109). To ensure a supportive climate, instructors should develop ways for students to build their self-image and enhance their self-concept (Simonds & Cooper, 2011). A more developed sense of self will enhance students' comfort and subsequently boost participation. With students' increased participation in a class, each student will contribute to the entire class's overall knowledge gained from multiple perspectives and cultural backgrounds. It is important to gain some understanding of veteran culture before being able to be responsive to the teaching of veteran students.

## **4.3 Connecting Veteran Students to the Classroom**

In a CRP focused learning environment, the "strengths [that] students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement" (Richards et al., 2007, p. 64). This can be achieved by instructors learning to view the world through the perspectives of students, and by allowing students to share from their own perspectives. The perspectives held by individual students are formed through lived experiences. When students feel like they can connect to the curriculum from familiar standpoints, it helps them feel more connected to the learning experience. This will bring an appreciation to instructors that can reach deeper than knowing what job a veteran performed while serving.

## **4.4 A Chance to Understand Veterans More In-Depth**

It is simple to assume that a veteran's experience was "easier" or "tougher" based on uninformed or misguided information available in popular discourse or culture. For example, when the word "combat" is used to describe a military occupational specialty (MOS), it is often immediately seen as more hazardous and tough. The truth is there are many hazardous jobs in the military that are not described as combat specific jobs. Therefore, a chance to participate in an immersive cultural experience with different branches and MOSs would increase the ability to better understand the various perspectives of the veterans in our classrooms. An immersive experience can provide a more accurate

understanding of military service and the variables included that make the experiences unique for each veteran. Although this guidebook allows for a small immersive experience through my own perspective, it is not as in-depth as some immersive experiences could be. Creating an opportunity to participate in an immersive experience of a deeper level would be beneficial in gaining multiple perspectives of veteran students.

*My first deployment was a combat deployment to Iraq. I was a young Marine Lance Corporal and only knew that I had no idea what to expect. The MOS I had was one that was heavily relied on by the Marine Corps due to the capabilities of our vehicles. We were responsible for transporting the infantry forces to the areas of combat and providing support for all missions from ship to shore and inland. We were amphibious and did a lot of training in the water. When we were told we were going to Iraq, we were not sure what the experience would mean for us. At least my peers and I were not privy to the information. We did constant training leading up to our deployment, and the day to depart from our base in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina to Kuwait arrived sooner than expected. It was a brisk early morning in February, our entire Battalion was formed up outside of the barracks in individual company formations. Everything had a strange feel and sense of nervous excitement. Seabags were stacked in huge piles that resembled green mountains strategically placed around the parking lot that we were using as a staging area. Before long, a parade of long white busses (that are familiar on every base I have been on) begin pulling in and coming to a stop in a long line that resembled a passenger train. There were many families who had come to see their loved ones be sent away, but there were also many younger single Marines who had no one. Each platoon was ordered to board a specific bus, and accountability of gear and personnel was conducted. As we pulled out of the parking lot there were lots of waves and kisses being blown. When the bus pulled out of sight, an ominous silence took over. We were on our way to get on a plane to go fight in a war. The feeling was surreal.*

## **Section 5. Into the College Classroom**

Instructors in higher education will continue to learn more effective teaching strategies. The goalpost will and should continue moving in a direction of improvement. The good news is that it seems completely possible to fill a classroom full of literature on suggestions and techniques to use for improving the effectiveness of one's teaching. As we approach our 20-year anniversary of September 11, 2001, the conflicts that began that day are reducing operations drastically. This 20-year mark represents a minimum time in service to be eligible for retirement from the military. As our recent wars of Operations Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Enduring Freedom (OEF) are our country's longest conflicts, the veterans of this era have either transitioned recently, or will be in the near future. These veterans will be arriving on our college campuses with challenges. It will be our responsibility as instructors, to reach these students in our class, in an effort to help them reach success as a college student.

This section will cover: preparing classes with veteran students in mind, suggestions on best practices to achieving a desired outcome for veteran students, how to gain perspective of individual veterans, and how veteran students can become an asset in the classroom as a unique voice with unique life experience. This section will not be an exhaustive list of effective techniques to consider when your class includes a veteran student. It is intended to be a foundational guide that opens the conversation of reaching a veteran student once they have entered our classrooms.

Cultural diversity in higher education is an undeniable fact. Instructors in higher education will benefit from the research that has been conducted in culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). It is important to consider each culture represented in class. This guidebook is focusing on one specific culture. When veterans cross through the thresholds of our classrooms, we want to be prepared to be a positive attribute to their successes in socialization and education. Therefore, the following suggestions are informed through research in both organizational socialization (OS), CRP, and from the personal recollections of important factors leading to the social and educational success of a Marine Corps veteran college student.

### **5.1 Preparing Our Classes with Veteran Students in Mind**

Preparing our classes involves many details of which to be concerned. There are syllabi to create, schedules that need to be made, rosters, supporting educational materials, lesson planning, all to name a few. Additionally, modalities of online versus face-to-face teaching can present new considerations including but not limited to student concerns about privacy. In a face-to-face environment,

it is important to think about emergency procedures, seating arrangements, classroom setup, etc. All students will benefit from thoughtful classroom preparation. Veteran students might require special considerations.

The syllabus is often the very first document a student will have that provides information about a particular class and the instructor who is teaching it. Some departments require instructors to add specific content areas, and other departments allow more autonomy for instructors to include information as they choose. Existing research suggests that instructors who are planning to have veteran students in the classroom should include a statement about the classroom being a safe environment for veteran students to share and interact. This small gesture can encourage involvement and a sense of feeling like a member. Both responses are beneficial in helping veteran students succeed. Research does also caution us about inserting a statement in our syllabi just to do so. For example, a declarative statement such as the one provided in the Veteran Affairs College Toolkit (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, n.d.), that states, “Veterans and active-duty military personnel with special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployments, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these, in advance if possible, to the instructor” as a good statement to include in your syllabi. If you do not have the knowledge or experience of veteran culture to affectively handle the situation if a student communicates a special circumstance, the statement could be received by the veteran as a misguided gesture of insincerity (Blackwell-Starnes, 2018). The syllabus is a first source of anticipatory documents for the veterans who will enter your learning spaces. The next consideration is easily overlooked; classroom setup.

In higher education, the faculty typically share classroom use amongst several instructors. There is less opportunity for designing a learning space to address specific cultural needs. The best instructors can do is provide an equitable learning space for all of our students, including veterans. Equity is not the same as equality. In a learning environment in which a culturally responsive approach to teaching is taking place, equity should be the goal. Equity is having the unique resources of each individual’s needs available to ensure each individual has the same opportunity to succeed. For example, if you are giving your students information that is important for passing a test and you had a blind student in your class, simply writing the information on the board would be equal for all of the students (equality). By writing the information on the board and making a verbal statement of the information is equity in action. All students in the class have the resources they each need, to have the same opportunity to succeed.

Equity for veteran students includes special arrangements for the classroom. The way a classroom is spatially setup is an often-overlooked variable when considering a veteran student. Something as simple as not requiring assigned seating is a way of incorporating an important element found in CRP of adapting our teaching methods and techniques to accommodate for our student's needs. Assigned seating could be uncomfortable for a veteran because it reduces access to instinct and agency, or independence.

*As a combat veteran I walk around and pay attention to my surroundings. It is a habit that was ingrained into my training and became a part of who I am. I am the student who will try to get to class before anyone else does on the first day. I do this because I like to enter the space and look around. I assess the space quickly to determine a seat that I want to "claim" as my own. I like to have a certain feeling of situational awareness of the things happening in my vicinity. By selecting a seat of my choice, I can put myself into a space in the manner that I choose to. I can position myself to have eyesight of the entrance, exit, and escape route if available. I take note of the mechanisms on the door, and the logistics in the room in case I need to act in an emergency situation. When other students enter the room, I try to identify if any of them pose a threat. If I get an uneasy feeling, I try to analyze why I am feeling this way, and keep a mental note. I will spend some time trying to find any potential habits or characteristics that I could use as an advantage if the need ever presented itself. This is how I became able to feel comfortable in the educational environment. I could not tell anyone this is what I did in every class. It is the way I was trained and learned to use as a survival instinct as a Marine. It is a part of who I am now.*

*I was usually cautious of sharing my Marine veteran identity in my classes. I did not always feel comfortable showing this side of me. I always maintained my personality and characteristics but I did not explicitly reference being a Marine if I felt it would feel weird. I would take communicative cues from my instructors and peers before deciding to share this knowledge or not. One memory that led to this decision was during the first-class meeting of a small class.*

*The instructor was going over the emergency procedures for active-shooter drills. We were asked how we might handle the situation if needed while in that specific classroom. I, of course, raised my hand because this is a situation that I look at in every location I am in. I looked around the trailer that we called our classroom. I identified all the danger areas and how to use your belt to lock the style of door we had. I talked about building a barricade of safety from the desks and tables in the room, and*

*how I would be one of the few volunteers needed to position ourselves strategically in the room to prevent anyone from entering, and help expedite others to safety when and if it was appropriate to do so. I must have explained very well. As I got finished explaining I realized every person in the room was looking at me with a look of awe. Several comments were made about “feeling safe with that guy here.” I could not determine if the way they were saying what they were saying was sarcastic or genuine. Either way I felt like I was looked at differently as if I made some of my peers uncomfortable. I recognized in that moment that I might want to keep to myself as much as possible, while still contributing to the class activities and assignments. I did not want to be seen as the scary veteran.*

*In this situation, I think the instructor could have engaged in a small discussion about how I was so aware. A small question such as, “That is very encouraging, you must have some experience handling these type situations. Would you mind sharing where you learned that information?” This small engagement would have allowed myself to present myself in the way I chose to. Instead, I was left feeling like I just isolated myself from the other students.*

Scholars point to three dimensions that make up CRP. The first is the institutional dimension which includes the political and physical structures of a school. The second is the personal dimension which instructors can work to improve understanding and knowledge of other cultures. The third dimension is the instructional dimension and provides instructors with some suggestions to approach teaching using concepts of CRP (Richards et al., 2007).

When preparing assignments with veterans in mind, we need to understand first and foremost that there are some commonalities in veteran students and traditional students. By acknowledging and not avoiding this fact, we can identify the common characteristics and differences and encourage both perspectives. Each student in our class has a perspective built from the lived experiences they have had. When our curriculum can connect to our veteran students standpoint, it helps them to feel more connected to the learning experience. This is important because all students in our classes can learn from each other. It fosters a comfortable environment when we can identify any potential negative feelings resulting from different perspectives and address them before an uncomfortable situation develops. This aligns closely with the perspective taking concept of culturally responsive teaching and allows a deeper understanding of others for all members in the classroom. It also helps strengthen the sense of community and caring in class.

*There were moments while enrolled in the local community college district that made me question where I was in life. One moment was when I registered for a class that was being taught at a high school campus site which was really close to where I worked, and had a class I needed. I registered for the class not knowing what to expect other than just another college class. I was not expecting to be part of a classroom that was filled with high school juniors and seniors. I was a 36-year-old Marine Corps veteran with a family and a good career. I was not sure how I should approach the situation. Honestly, I feel like it was an important learning moment. As I sat in class and watched literal “children” come into the same class to be taught the same information, I was humbled. I realized at that moment that this education thing was going to be something that provides a learning experience in many forms. In the military, I was used to being in educational environments with people who were at least similar in age to myself. Of course, the ages ranged across the military, but in the situations where I was receiving formal instruction, I was surrounded by similar ranks and age as myself. I always did well in the instructional situations with peers more similar to myself so I felt like I would be able to shine in this class. I thought my life experiences would be a benefit to the subject of speech and debate. In one randomly selected team debate, I was paired up to debate with a 15-year-old kid who was incredibly smart. This kid had aspirations of becoming a lawyer, and his debate performance suggested he was considering the right career. I learned in that class that I could learn from my peers just as much as my peers could learn from me. As instructors, this is a good thing to keep in mind. Veteran students will benefit from being exposed to and gaining perspective from peers who seem would be completely different.*

Depending on the courses you are teaching, there are times when discussions in higher education classes become intense. This does not need to be an uncomfortable experience for anyone in class. Research (Gay, 2002) suggests including culturally diverse content in the curriculum. This inclusion of diverse content has the capability to challenge existing biases and ideologies of the members in your class. These situations will arise because the perspectives are so diverse. An example situation where the conversation might get tense is a discussion about America’s military involvement in world affairs. If a veteran student is in your class, understand that strong and differing opinions most likely exist among the students, possibly even yourself. As instructors it is our responsibility to facilitate the difficult discourse that happens in our class. Learning how to facilitate difficult discourse is one beneficial learning outcome of a professional development course.

A professional development course is not an unusual thing to find in any organization. In higher education, instructors benefit from these courses in many ways. In fact, Samuels (2018) identified four specific areas that instructors would benefit from engaging in a professional development course, or other learning opportunity. These areas would help bring culturally responsive teaching concepts into our classrooms and include: 1.) Exploring our existing ideas of diversity through self-reflection; 2.) Engaging in controversial discussions to increase situational awareness as a facilitator of difficult discourse; 3.) Learning to incorporate inclusive teaching strategies into the educational environment; and 4.) Engaging in honest and open conversations with peers on how to foster an inclusive climate for all cultures in a classroom, including our veteran students. Table 5.1 has some suggestions on ways to prepare to instruct veteran students in a culturally responsive manner while keeping Samuels' (2018) concepts in consideration.

**Table 5.1. *Preparing Our Class with Veteran Students in Mind***

<b>Step in preparation</b>	<b>Recommended</b>	<b>Not Recommended</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal reflection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look into yourself to identify your own standpoints, biases, and other assumptions gained from your own experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assuming your perspective is the only correct one.</li> <li>Dismissing other perspectives in the classroom</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding the veteran students in your classrooms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Become familiar with the veteran resources on your campus. These could include the Veteran's Success Center (VSC) or Student Veterans of America (SVA) chapter. These organizations are good ways to form interpersonal relationships with knowledgeable veteran friendly organizational members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being hesitant in spending time with veteran connected groups on campus, whether you are volunteering or simply observing</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning assignments or class activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge and accept that veteran students have both common traits and differences with their peers. Not every situation will be experienced differently based on veteran status alone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assuming that veteran students are all the same</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating the syllabi for your classes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include a statement in your syllabi that recognizes veterans as a culture, along with other cultures that are already represented</li> <li>Gain knowledge of veteran culture to learn about their potential needs in the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excluding other cultures in the statement</li> <li>Including an insincere statement of inclusion just to do so</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determining what challenges that a veteran student might have in learning the class material</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the difference in equality and equity when considering techniques and methods of teaching</li> <li>Understand that a veteran might need some flexibility to any rigid rules of classroom management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assigning seats</li> <li>Letting veterans think they do not need to put effort into their own educational journey</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain knowledge of veterans through research, personal interaction, professional development, self-reflection, cultural training, and experience if able to</li> <li>• Let veteran students know that you are approachable and willing to adapt as you are able to, while still maintaining your standards</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrating veteran students into the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow veterans an opportunity to engage in class discussions</li> <li>• Encourage veteran's participation to provide their perspective on things being discussed in class</li> <li>• Learn to facilitate difficult discourse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking in a biased manner when discussing military politics</li> <li>• Discouraging difficult discourse</li> <li>• Silencing a veteran when they are participating in discussion</li> <li>• Accepting any abusive or hateful language a veteran uses to express frustrations with differing opinions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting veteran students to the classroom and peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create assignments that include military/ veteran culture</li> <li>• If able to, include military friendly images in the classroom</li> <li>• Design assignments that require critical thinking. This helps think about other perspectives and will result in a more positive classroom climate</li> <li>• Push veterans to produce their best work by maintaining high standards while also encouraging them through the recognition of their strengths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forcing the military or veteran assignment into the curriculum if it is not appropriate to do so</li> <li>• Shying away from challenging assignments for the veteran students</li> <li>• Lowering your standards for veteran students</li> </ul>
<p>Informed by (Richards et al., 2007; Gay, 2002)</p>		

## 5.2. How to Achieve a Desired Outcome for Our Veteran Students

Instructors are all in higher education for different reasons, it could be assumed that you each may have a unique idea of what “desired outcome” you have for our students. Literature in organizational socialization describe the socialization process in similar but unique ways. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) defined organizational socialization as being a process whereby an individual gains the social knowledge and skills needed to adopt the idea of being a member in the organization. By applying this simple definition, we might better be able to understand the socialization differences between military and our classrooms and implement socialization tactics that will more likely result in the desired outcome

*All through bootcamp, recruits were addressed as “recruit,” never as Marine. Until the day you complete the “crucible” event. The crucible is a culminating event near the end of bootcamp that consists of a 54- hour event that tests recruits physical and mental strength and skills learned in bootcamp. This is like the finals week version in bootcamp! We were put into squads and led by a single Drill Instructor. We “stepped off” to begin the crucible very early in the morning. The crucible is designed to push a recruit further than ever before, all while being food and sleep restricted. The final portion of the crucible is a 9-mile hike back to the parade deck of Parris Island where a large statue of the Iwo Jima flag raising is located. That 9-mile hike is tough, dirty, painful, emotional, and amazing at the same time. Each of us beamed with pride knowing that once we made it to the end of the last hike, we would have our Eagle, Globe, and Anchor ceremony. The ceremony does not represent the completion of bootcamp like a graduation ceremony typically does. There is a separate ceremony for graduating bootcamp. The Eagle, Globe, and Anchor ceremony symbolizes the crossover from recruit to Marine. The Drill Instructors formally give each recruit their Eagle, Globe, and Anchor, exchange words of encouragement, and ends every exchange with a look in the eyes, a firm handshake, and the words “congratulations Marine.” The feeling of accomplishment is unreal!*

Important to understand from this reflection, is that after gaining the knowledge and skills needed to adopt the role of Marine, it is not simply something that will easily be left behind. The tactics that the military uses to socialize newcomers to the organization are designed to achieve a custodial response from members. One tactic used in the military socialization process is a divestiture process. Research suggests that the use of a divestiture socialization process, which in effect is a reshaping of an individual, is a powerful way of ensuring control of an organization’s members. A strong divestiture process can

cause a member to build a new identity based on being a member of the organization. It is a way for the member to justify why they endured the difficult path to membership. This identity becomes part of the individual, and contributes to reasons military members are often deeply and permanently socialized. As instructors, understanding the socialization tactics of the military organization your veteran student has recently transitioned from, will be helpful in determining how to employ the tactics described in organizational socialization that will most likely result in a specific outcome for your veteran students. In an attempt to help identify some tactics that might work for your particular veteran student, some suggestions will be provided in the chart below. Although there are six contradictory pairs of dimensional tactics in the literature, some socialization tactics can more easily apply to the context of veterans in our college classrooms than others. It is important to recognize that the suggestions are simply that, suggested ways to implement socialization tactics. There will always be ways to adjust or add to the suggestions listed.

**Table 5.2.** *Suggestions for Best Practices of Socialization Tactics for Desired Outcomes*

Tactic Used	Potential Outcome	Example
Collective	<p>Peer groups form a network among themselves. The peer group learns to rely on and understand each other. The group might learn more from each other than from the instructor.</p> <p><i>**Potential to encourage an “us” versus “them” mentality</i></p>	<p>A cohort of graduate students who form a communication network outside of the classroom. The members share resources and provide empathy. The members graduate and stay in touch as colleagues and a lifelong social connection.</p>
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Possible mentor-mentee relationship development</li> <li>● Individuals will grow and develop uniquely based on the perception of the relationship between Instructor and student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Serving as an advisor</li> <li>● Being a member of a student’s graduate committee or chair</li> </ul>
Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The knowledge gained by a student is taught as the “accepted” way, but can be seen as irrelevant when the learning phase is complete</li> <li>● Students are proud to have committed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A certificate producing program prepares students to take careers in a specific industry, by training to “industry standards”. After the completion of the program and joining an organization, the students begin to realize that there are more efficient ways to complete a task than they were taught was “the way to do it”</li> </ul>
Informal	<p>Students assuming new roles with attitudes towards membership and task completion that are determined primarily by the individuals whom they sought out for learning.</p>	<p>Group work and activities can allow veteran students an opportunity to take a leadership role or accept a role of learner in the group. It will also present an opportunity for veteran students to seek out other peers for learning.</p>
Sequential	<p>Students understanding that the order of topics covered in the course is practical and logical will ultimately notice a change in themselves when reflecting on the experience.</p>	<p>Providing a step process of learning in a course, or scaffolding the assignments. Especially helpful in challenging courses.</p>

### 5.3 Gain Perspective of Veteran Students

*I transferred schools because I decided during my time away from school that I wanted to change my major from food science to communication studies. This new school campus was small, but close to home and accessible after work. I had 2 classes the first semester back. I had a statistics class and a history class. As I walked down to find a seat at the front of the history class the Instructor looked up from what she was doing and said, "hello, how are you doing today?" Something about the genuine way she seemed to ask about how I was doing, made me feel welcomed in this class. I sat down in the fold down auditorium seat and prepared myself to take notes and listen to a history lecture. The class was not a lecture period after all. It was a day to explain the syllabus and class expectations and assignments, and we were released early. I took my time leaving class because I felt uncomfortable interacting with other students at this time. As I waited for the last students to make their way out of class, I found myself walking with the Instructor. A conversation began that felt like a conversation you would have with your Grandma who was dear to you. She genuinely made an effort to find out about who I was. This was not the same experience I felt last year in school. I could feel my sense of appreciation for this instructor increase with each class meeting. She would not always address me but when appropriate and able to do so, she would ask how I was doing. This small gesture helped to make me feel welcome into a college classroom for the first time in my life. I remember thinking, "Maybe I found a place in this education thing after all."*

The ability to take a perspective of veteran students who show up to our class with different life experiences is an important step in responding to cultural differences when teaching. Veteran students are from a culture that is unique to other cultures. It is not a culture of ethnic background. It is a culture that encompasses all other cultures. It demands its members to fully commit to the rules that are designed to be successful and functional. It is a culture that members experience in different ways depending on many variables. Each variable that is different will contribute to a unique experience, and a unique perspective of each member. Gaining different perspectives of veteran students could be challenging (see suggestions provided in Table 5.3). There are several ways to effectively gain this perspective. Some are more logistically challenging but with proper resources would be an excellent suggestion. As with all suggestions in this guidebook, the list is not exhaustive.

**Table 5.3. Gaining Perspectives of Veteran Student**

Recommended	How to Do It (Examples)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage in simple, open, and honest conversation with the veteran student</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hi there, how are you?</li> <li>Oh, you're a veteran? Awesome, what branch were you in?</li> <li>How was your experience?</li> <li>What do you do now?</li> <li>Do you have any questions or concerns about our class?</li> <li>If you are comfortable to, I encourage your participation in class discussion. It would be nice to hear your input on things</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow veterans an opportunity to share experiences as they desire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you think about ....?</li> <li>There is an assignment coming up that I would like to discuss with you. I want you to be comfortable sharing about your experiences</li> <li>Does this reflect your same experience with ....?</li> <li>Create assignments that allow veterans an opportunity to write their experiences if they choose. Speaking freely in class about experiences might be uncomfortable. Being able to write and knowing only the instructor will see, can provide a comfortable way to share perspective</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend professional development courses geared towards understanding veterans in higher education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting with local Veteran Service Centers to inquire about available seminars</li> <li>Reaching out to local military installations' public relations/ liaisons officers to coordinate a visit/ tour for instructors in your department</li> <li>Invite a panel of veteran students to speak in a Q&amp;A format or speaking event</li> <li>Reach out to the local community and invite a veteran to the class to speak about their experience</li> <li>Participate in a "Day in the Life of...." Event</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize any available resources such as libraries, internet, networking, etc.</li> </ul>

## 5.4 Veteran Students as an Asset in the Classroom

Each student who walks into your classrooms becomes an asset. Every individual can contribute a unique perspective on the topics that are covered in class. Sometimes, these perspectives are informed through a quiet life with few experiences, and sometimes these perspectives are from a life filled with experiences of different types. The veteran students in our classrooms will come to us with at least some experiences that can provide perspective on overcoming challenges, enduring difficult situations, and committing to something and following through on it. The lessons learned by nontraditional college students can contribute interesting insight and we must enable them to contribute to our classes when it is appropriate to do so.

Veteran students enter classrooms ready to excel in academic endeavors. Although there are some challenges encountered along the way, veterans have been recognized as setting an example of being a student learner. Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Members (*Student Veterans*, n.d.) lists several reasons why veterans are an asset to higher education organizations. We can understand how being an asset to an organization can flow into being an asset in our classrooms by thinking on a smaller scale. Examples include: the fact that veterans are often highly trained with technical skills that transfer well to academics, the unique life experiences previously mentioned, the ability to endure the rigors of military training that involves high stress situations where learning needs to happen, the personal characteristics to adapt and overcome situations, strong work ethic, and dedication to achieving success (Dedman, 2017; *Student Veterans*, n.d). It is no wonder that our veteran students can provide us with an opportunity to pull from their knowledge to contribute to an overall more positive classroom climate. It also serves as a great way to let the veteran student know that their experiences matter.

*When I was a student in a persuasive communication class, I was invited to give examples on the way the Marine Corps used persuasive communication to achieve a desired goal. I talked about how the way the military used persuasive communication overlaps with the material we were learning in class. The instructor would ask me to provide input on topics such as credibility, compliance gaining, language use, and other ways that were used to persuade military members. This was a very positive thing for me as a student. Not only did I feel like my experiences were being validated, I also felt like my experiences were an asset to the class. The idea that the instructor was willing to allow me an opportunity to contribute, increased my motivation for being in the class as an asset to the instructor. It made me feel worthy again! Immediately following class, I called my wife explaining that the coolest thing happened.*

Such a simple gesture from the instructor helped me feel as though I mattered again. As a veteran student that had been lost many times throughout my educational journey, this was an important moment that truly made me feel accepted as a member in a higher education organization. It was as if I was experiencing the metamorphosis stage of socialization in higher education. I again felt like I belonged somewhere. In what ways can we access the benefit of having a veteran student? In Table 5.4 I provide ways that you can use the veterans in your class as a helpful contribution to creating a positive classroom climate.

**Table 5.4. Veteran Students as Assets in Our Classrooms**

Situation	Recommended	Not Recommended
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductory conversations</li> <li>• Office hour visit by veteran student</li> <li>• General conversations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explicitly ask the veteran during a private conversation if the concepts being covered in class are also found in the military experience that they had</li> <li>• Ask them if they would be willing to share with the class whatever their experience is</li> <li>• When the situation is appropriate, invite the veteran to speak if they agree to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forcing the student to contribute</li> <li>• Trying to connect a concept with military service if it is not a logical connection to the material</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When integrating veteran students into class discussions</li> <li>• When evaluating veteran students' assignments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay attention to the strengths of your student veterans</li> <li>• Understand the strengths will be unique for each veteran</li> <li>• Remember, the skills learned in the military are not easily forgotten</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ignoring the signs of veterans wanting to contribute to class</li> <li>• Forgetting to respect the veteran's position in ways that are informed by gaining their specific perspective</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When encouraging veteran student motivation in the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize the achievements of the veteran students such as scholastic achievements, work ethic, commitment to tasks, and maturity in the classroom</li> <li>• Find ways to show veteran students that you recognize the great things they are doing (good job!)</li> <li>• Remain unbiased (or positive) when speaking about the military</li> <li>• Treat veterans equally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making your recognition of the achievements made be a public display</li> <li>• Speaking negatively about military or its members in class</li> <li>• Missing an opportunity to show that you appreciate the veteran simply being a part of the class</li> <li>• Treating veterans with favoritism</li> </ul>

As you work to understand the veteran students in your class, it is important to realize that the journey will never be complete. Instructors can prepare for having veteran students in class. Through research, and the knowledge that will be learned as each veteran student comes and goes, by understanding yourselves, your beliefs, and your biases, you can begin to

understand this culture of student more effectively. By understanding that the veteran students in your classrooms have been through a different process of socialization, you can take steps to employ socialization tactics throughout the now recognizable phases of socialization that will encourage a desired outcome. You can now recognize that the anticipatory phase of entering higher education is different for veterans than for traditional students. The encounter phase that veterans are in when sitting in your classrooms for the first time, is often an intimidating time. The steps you choose to make in your classrooms will determine the success of the veteran student.

Not all veteran students will respond to the suggestions provided in this guidebook. This is simply a guidebook that provides the experiences of one Marine Corps veteran college student who has benefited from the suggestions found in existing literature on organizational socialization phases, tactics and outcomes, and culturally responsive pedagogical concepts. I invite you to explore the unique benefit of fully connecting with your student veterans, using them as an asset in your classrooms, and letting their voices be heard. You will be contributing in greater ways than you could imagine. You will be helping an underrepresented cultural group to succeed in education and in life.

Enjoy the experience! I know I did!

## Section 6. Resources for Instructors and Veteran Students

This section is dedicated to finding resources that can be helpful to instructors as well as identifying resources that may be helpful to your veteran students. Blank rows are present to input your own organization's resources available locally, whether it is on campus or in the local geographical area.

**Table 6.1** *Helpful Resources*

Resource	Contact Information
American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress	(631) 543-2217 <a href="http://www.aaets.org">www.aaets.org</a>
American Red Cross	1-877-272-7337 <a href="http://www.redcross.org">www.redcross.org</a>
American Veterans (AMVETS)	(301) 459-9600 <a href="http://www.amvets.org">www.amvets.org</a>
Army A-Z	<a href="https://www.army.mil/info/a-z/">https://www.army.mil/info/a-z/</a>
Army Continuing Education System	<a href="http://www.goarmyed.com/">http://www.goarmyed.com/</a>
CareerOneStop	<a href="https://www.careeronestop.org/Veterans/default.aspx">https://www.careeronestop.org/Veterans/default.aspx</a>
Center for Women Veterans	<a href="http://www.va.gov/womenvet">http://www.va.gov/womenvet</a>
Education Scholarships / DANTES Testing Education Services Specialist (ESS)	<a href="http://www.dantes.doded.mil/service-members/index.html">http://www.dantes.doded.mil/service-members/index.html</a>
Military Benefits	<a href="http://www.military.com/benefits">http://www.military.com/benefits</a>
Military OneSource	<a href="http://www.militaryonesource.mil/">http://www.militaryonesource.mil/</a>
National Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies	1-800-424-2246 <a href="http://childcareaware.org">childcareaware.org</a>
National Mental Health Association	1-800-969-NMHA (6642) <a href="http://www.nmha.org/military-mental-health">www.nmha.org/military-mental-health</a>

Student Veterans of America	(202) 223-4710 <a href="https://studentveterans.org/">https://studentveterans.org/</a>
VA Suicide Hotline	1-800-273-8255
VA College Toolkit: Information for Faculty and Staff	<a href="https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/student-veteran/info-for-faculty-staff.asp">https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/student-veteran/info-for-faculty-staff.asp</a>
VA Education Benefits	<a href="https://www.va.gov/education">https://www.va.gov/education</a>
VA Health Care Enrollment Information	<a href="http://www.va.gov/health/index.asp">http://www.va.gov/health/index.asp</a>
Veteran Center Offices by State	<a href="https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/">https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/</a>
Veterans Crisis Line	1-800-273-8255 (Press 1)
Veterans Education Success	<a href="https://vetsedsuccess.org/">https://vetsedsuccess.org/</a>

*I am preparing to exit higher education as a student and continue my journey from young child, to troubled teenager, to Marine Corps veteran, to college graduate, and into higher education as a full-time instructor. I am happy to have achieved several life goals along the way. I am confident that a small number of members in the organizations that I have*

*been a part of, are the reason I am a success story. They have helped me through the socialization process of becoming a member of organizations of which I am proud to belong. I will continue connecting my experiences to the classrooms of higher education and use this guidebook to remind me that our students will enter our classrooms with a variety of lived experiences. Together, we can be a part of the puzzle that contributes to the success of the veterans of America as they choose to get out of the military and into the college classroom!*

## REFERENCES

- Abacioglu, C. S., Volman, M., & Fischer, A. H. (2020). Teachers' multicultural attitudes and perspective taking abilities as factors in culturally responsive teaching. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *90*(3), 736–752.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12328>
- Ackerman, R., DiRamio, D., & Mitchell, R. L. G. (2009). Transitions: Combat veterans as college students. *New Directions for Student Services*, *2009*(126), 5–14.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.311>
- Ahern, J., Worthen, M., Masters, J., Lippman, S. A., Ozer, E. J., & Moos, R. (2015). The challenges of Afghanistan and Iraq veterans' transition from military to civilian life and approaches to reconnection. *PLOS ONE*, *10*(7), e0128599.  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0128599>
- Bialik, K. (2017). 5 facts about U.S. veterans. *Pew Research Center*. Retrieved September 19, 2020, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/11/10/the-changing-face-of-americas-veteran-population/>
- Blackwell-Starnes, K. (2018). At ease: Developing veterans' sense of belonging in the college classroom. *Journal of Veterans Studies*, *3*(1), 18–36.  
<https://doi.org/10.21061/jvs.2>
- Brown, D. F. (2004). Urban teachers' professed classroom management strategies: Reflections of culturally responsive teaching. *Urban Education*, *39*(3), 266–289.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085904263258>

- Cable, D. M., Gino, F., & Staats, B. R. (2013). Breaking them in or eliciting their best? Reframing socialization around newcomers' authentic self-expression. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 58(1), 1–36.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839213477098>
- Carnell, E., Lodge, C., Wagner, P., Watkins, C., Whalley, C., Wagner, M. P., Whalley, C., Carnell, D. E., Lodge, C., & Wagner, M. P. (2000). *Learning about learning: Resources for supporting effective learning*. ProQuest Ebook Central <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Chao, G. T., O'Leary-Kelly, A. M., Wolf, S., Klein, H. J., & Gardner, P. D. (1994). Organizational socialization: Its content and consequences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(5), 730–743. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.79.5.730>
- Connor, R. R., Boivin, M. R., Packnett, E. R., Toolin, C. F., & Cowan, D. N. (2016). The relationship between deployment frequency and cumulative duration, and discharge for disability retirement among enlisted active duty Soldiers and Marines. *Military Medicine*, 181(11), e1532–e1539.  
<https://doi.org/10.7205/MILMED-D-16-00016>
- Copeland, L. A., Zeber, J. E., Bingham, M. O., Pugh, M. J., Noël, P. H., Schmacker, E. R., & Lawrence, V. A. (2011). Transition from military to VHA care: Psychiatric health services for Iraq/Afghanistan combat-wounded. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 130(1–2), 226–230. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2010.10.017>

- Croucher, S. M. & Cron-Mills, D. (2015) *Understanding communication research methods: A theoretical and practical approach*. New York, NY: Routledge
- Dalenberg, S., & Buijs, T. (2013). *Military socialization effects and effective leadership behaviour* (pp. 97–116).
- Davis, C., & Myers, K. (2012). Communication and member disengagement in planned organizational exit. *Western Journal of Communication*, 76(2), 194–216.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10570314.2011.651250>
- DeBellis, N. (2020). Research guides: Gray literature: gray literature. Retrieved November 6, 2020, from <https://csulb.libguides.com/graylit/start>
- Dedman, B. (2017, March 17). *Facts & figures – “talent hiding in plain sight”: The success of student veterans* [Text]. Association of American Colleges & Universities. <https://www.aacu.org/aacu-news/2017/april/facts-figures>
- Dexter, J. C. (2020). Human resources challenges of military to civilian employment transitions. *Career Development International*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print).  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-02-2019-0032>
- Dillard, R. J, & Yu, H. H. (2016). Best practices in student veteran education: Making a “veteran friendly” institution. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, 64(3), 181-186. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07377363.2016.1229106>
- Dortch, C. (n.d.). *The post-9/11 GI Bill: A primer*. 28.

- Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press
- Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 53(2), 106–116. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487102053002003>
- Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. Teachers College Press.  
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csusb/detail.action?docID=5309048>
- Geršicová, Z. (2016). Class teachers – Their thinking and reasoning in the context of creating a favourable classroom social climate by means of the methods of personal and social education, *Acta Educationis Generalis*, 6(1), 27-41.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1515/atd-2016-0004>
- Graf, N. M., Ysasi, N. A., & Marini, I. (2015). Assessment of military viewpoints regarding post-secondary education: Classroom preferences and experiences. *Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin*, 59(1), 18–29.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0034355214558937>
- Grant, C. A. (1979). Classroom socialization: The other side of a two-way street. *Educational Leadership*, 6, 470-473.
- Gregg, B. T., Howell, D. M., & Shordike, A. (2016). Experiences of veterans transitioning to postsecondary education. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 70(6), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2016.021030>
- Griffin, L. B., Watson, D., & Liggett, T. (2016). “I didn’t see it as a cultural thing”: Supervisors of student teachers define and describe culturally responsive

supervision. *Democracy & Education*, 24(1).

<http://libproxy.lib.csusb.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1100183&site=ehost-live>

Harmon, D. A. (2012). Culturally responsive teaching through a historical lens: Will history repeat itself? *Interdisciplinary Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 2(1), 12–22.

Hinderaker, A. (2015). Severing primary ties: Exit from totalistic organizations. *Western Journal of Communication*, 79(1), 92–115.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10570314.2014.943422>

Hodges, E. (2018). Teaching veterans studies: Bridging the gap between U.S civilians and veterans through the college classroom. *Journal of Veterans Studies*, 3(1), 89–105. <https://doi.org/10.21061/jvs.7>

Howe, W. T., & Hinderaker, A. (2018). “The rule was the rule”: New member socialization in rigidly structured totalistic organizations. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 26(3), 180–195.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2018.1472093>

Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on the Initial Assessment of Readjustment Needs of Military Personnel, Veterans, and Their Families. (2010). *Returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan: Preliminary assessment of readjustment needs of veterans, service members, and their families*. National Academies Press (US). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK220072/> doi: 10.17226/12812

- Jablin, F. M. (2001). Organizational entry, assimilation, and disengagement/exit. In F.M Jablin., & L. L. Putnam. (Eds.). *The new handbook of Organizational Communication* (pp. 732- 818). Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage Publications, Inc.  
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412986243.n19>
- Jeffreys, M. R. E. (2007). Nontraditional students' perceptions of variables influencing retention: A multisite study. *Nurse Educator*, 32(4), 161–167.  
<https://doi.org/10.1097/01.NNE.0000281086.35464.ed>
- Jenner, B. M. (2017). Student veterans and the transition to higher education: Integrating existing literatures. *Journal of Veterans Studies*, 2(2), 26–44.  
<http://doi.org/10.21061/jvs.14>
- Kirchner, M. J. (2015). Supporting student veteran transition to college and academic success. *Adult Learning*, 26(3), 116–123.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1045159515583813>
- Knight, J. P. (1990). Literature as equipment for killing: Performance as rhetoric in military training camps. *Text & Performance Quarterly*, 10(2), 157-168.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10462939009365965>
- Kramer, M. W., & Miller, V. D. (1999). A response to criticisms of organizational socialization research: In support of contemporary conceptualizations of organizational assimilation. *Communication Monographs*, 66(4), 358–367.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03637759909376485>

- Kramer, M. W., & Miller, V. D. (2014). Socialization and assimilation: Theories, processes, and outcomes. In L. Putnam, K. Dennis (Eds.), *The sage handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory* (pp. 525-547). Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage publications
- Kratochvil, B. (2014). *Assessing student success efforts for military students in a California community college* [Ed.D., California State University, Stanislaus].  
<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1615359291/abstract/F9211DD14EC048C8PQ/1>
- Lapadat, J. C. (2017). Ethics in autoethnography and collaborative autoethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 23(8), 589–603. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800417704462>
- Mavor, A. S., & Sackett, P. (2003). *Attitudes, aptitudes, and aspirations of American youth: Implications for military recruitment*. National Academies Press.  
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csusb/detail.action?docID=3375169>
- McDaniel, E.R., Samovar, L. A., & Porter, R. E. (2006). Understanding intercultural communication: An overview. In L. A Samovar, R. E. Porter, and E. R. McDaniel (Eds.) *Intercultural communication: A reader* (11th ed). (pp. 6- 16). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- McLean, K. C., & Syed, M. (2014). *The oxford handbook of identity development*. Oxford University Press, Incorporated.  
<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/csusb/detail.action?docID=1814987>

Melillo, C., Downs, K., Dillahunt-Aspillaga, C., Lind, J., Besterman-Dahan, K., Hahm, B., Antinori, N., Elnitsky, C., Sander, A. M., Belanger, H. G., Toyinbo, P., & Powell-Cope, G. (2019). Action ethnography of community reintegration for veterans and military service members with traumatic brain injury: Protocol for a mixed methods study. *JMIR Research Protocols*, 8(11), e14170.

<https://doi.org/10.2196/14170>

Myers, M. (2020). *Studies tackle who joins the military and why, but their findings aren't what many assume*. Military Times.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/04/27/studies-tackle-who-joins-the-military-and-why-but-their-findings-arent-what-many-assume/>

Naphan, D. E., & Elliott, M. (2015). Role exit from the military: Student veterans' perceptions of transitioning from the U.S. military to higher education. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(2), 36-48. Retrieved from <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol20/iss2/>

Norman, S. B., Rosen, J., Himmerich, S., Myers, U. S., Davis, B., Browne, K. C., & Piland, N. (2015). Student Veteran perceptions of facilitators and barriers to achieving academic goals. *Journal of Rehabilitation Research & Development*, 52(6), 701–712. <https://doi.org/10.1682/JRRD.2015.01.0013>

O'Herrin, E. (2011). Enhancing veteran success in higher education. *Peer Review*, 13(1), 15–18.

- Ostroff, C., & Kozlowski, S. W. J. (1992). Organizational socialization as a learning process: The role of information acquisition. *Personnel Psychology*, 45(4), 849–874.
- Pelletier, S. G. (2010). *Success for adult students*. 5.
- Richards, H. V., Brown, A. F., & Forde, T. B. (2007). Addressing diversity in schools: Culturally responsive pedagogy. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 39(3), 64–68.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/004005990703900310>
- Ronai, C. R. (1995). Multiple reflections of child sex abuse. An argument for a layered account. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 23(4), 395–426.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/089124195023004001>
- Samuels, A. J. (2018). *Exploring culturally responsive pedagogy: Teachers' perspectives on fostering equitable and inclusive classrooms*. 27(1), 22-30.
- Simonds, C. J., & Cooper, P. J. (2011). *Communication for the classroom teacher*. (9th ed.). Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- Sleeter, C. E. (2012). Confronting the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy. *Urban Education*, 47(3), 562–584.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085911431472>
- Spry, T. (2001). Performing autoethnography: An embodied methodological praxis. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(6), 706–732. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040100700605>
- Student Veterans: A Valuable Asset to Higher Education*. (n.d.). Institute for Veterans and Military Families. Retrieved February 10, 2021, from [/student-veterans-a-valuable-asset-to-higher-education/](#)

- 38 U.S. Code § 101 - Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved November 16, 2020, from <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/38/101>
- Tracy, S. J. (2020). *Qualitative research methods: collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact* (2nd ed.). Wiley Blackwell.
- Transition readiness program. (n.d.). *MCCS Camp Pendleton*. Retrieved September 26, 2020, from <https://www.mccscp.com/transition/>
- U.S. Congress. Congressional Budget Office. (2019). *The Post-9/11 GI Bill: Beneficiaries, Choices, and Cost*. Congressional Publications.
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (n.d.). *VA College Toolkit: Info for Faculty & Staff*. Retrieved March 1, 2021, from <https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/student-veteran/info-for-faculty-staff.asp>
- Vacchi, D., Hammond, S., & Diamond, A. (2017). Conceptual models of student veteran college experiences. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 2016(171), 23–41. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ir.20192>
- Van Maanen, J., & Schein, E. H. (1979). Toward a theory of organizational socialization. In B. M. Staw (Ed.), *Research in organizational behavior* (pp. 209-264). Greenwich, CT: JAI.
- Veterans – *PNPI*. (n.d.). Retrieved July 29, 2020, from <https://pnpi.org/veterans-in-higher-education/>
- Vogt, D., Perkins, D. F., Copeland, L. A., Finley, E. P., Jamieson, C. S., Booth, B., Lederer, S., & Gilman, C. L. (2018). *The veterans metrics initiative study of US*

veterans' experiences during their transition from military service. *BMJ Open*, 8(6), e020734. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2017-020734>

Wallace, J. (2019). *Types of military discharges*. <https://militarybenefits.info/types-of-military-discharges-2/>

Watkins, C., Carnell, E., & Lodge, C. (2007). *Effective learning in classrooms*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.

Zorn, T. E., & Gregory, K. W. (2005). Learning the ropes together: Assimilation and friendship development among first-year male medical students. *Health Communication*, 17(3), 211–231. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327027hc1703\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327027hc1703_1)