

I'm writing to provide useful information regarding students who may be called to active military service during the COVID-19 pandemic. I also want to provide suggestions, based on collaboration with campus partners, on how we best address these students' needs.

Over the last couple of weeks, many of our Military men and women have been called up in response to the spread of the COVID-19 virus. It is important to understand the differences between 'activated' and 'deployed.' Activated means that the Governor and/or the President of the United States has told either state or federal units to begin preparing for the possibility that they may be deployed to support the COVID-19 response. Deployed means that a military unit has been given specific orders to report to a designated location for military operations. Deployment orders also dictate when members must report to their military unit for deployment preparation.

There are five types of military students who may be activated over the next few weeks or months. They serve in all branches of the military (Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard). They can be undergraduate, graduate, or post-graduate students. Here is a brief description of the categories of military service:

- Active Duty: Member is under contract with the Department of Defense (DoD) and is on orders to the university for the purpose of obtaining an academic degree. They will return to an active duty unit once they complete their degree.
- Reservist: Member is under contract with the DoD and serves only when actively drilling or when activated in times of war or national emergency. Each branch of the military has a reserve component that is under the jurisdiction of the federal government.
- National Guard: Member is under contract with the DoD and serves in the Army or Air Force when actively drilling or when activated in times of war or national emergencies. The National Guard is under the command of each state's governor. The president can "federalize" National Guard units in times of crisis.
- Texas State Guard: Member is under contract with the state. The Texas State Guard is only under command of the governor.
- Individual Ready Reserve (IRR): Members of the IRR may be called upon, if needed, to replace members in active duty and reserve units. Many members have recently left active duty but still need to fulfill their Military Service Obligation (usually 8 years) under Section 651 of Title 10 USC. Some commissioned officers and retired career military members may also be recalled to Active Duty.

In anticipation that we may have a large number of students deployed in response to COVID-19 in the coming weeks, Please review the [University's policy on military absences.](#)

Regarding UT's policy on [Withdrawal for military service](#), students are enrolled in a variety of programs, each with their own start and end dates. This can result in students having differing 75% course completion dates (the threshold requiring them to withdraw under state law). For most undergraduate students, we estimate the 75% completion date will fall on or around April 12, 2020.

Based on President Fennes' desire to keep as many students enrolled as possible during this complicated time, we ask that all colleges, Deans, departments, and faculty work with Student Veteran Services and these impacted students to ensure that no one withdraws unnecessarily.

Student Veteran Services will be working with each student and plans to work with each college on a case-by-case basis to explore options that serve both the student and the university's accreditation requirements.

While every student on the 40 Acres is having to make unprecedented adjustments during this difficult time, extra assistance may be required for those students who serve our nation and who will be deployed to the front lines in the fight against COVID-19. Thank you for your continued support of our Military women and men.

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Students have been provided the following guidance if they are activated and/or deployed:

*[Email Student Veteran Services](#) with the following information (if limited by OPSEC, please provide as much information as possible):*

- *Your Name:*
- *UTEID:*
- *Military Unit:*
- *Anticipated deployment location:*
- *Expected deployment date:*
- *Estimated deployment duration:*
- *A copy of your orders (if you have them)*

*Additionally, you should:*

- *Read UT's policy on [military absences](#).*
- *Read UT's policy regarding [Withdrawal for military service](#) if you anticipate that you will miss more than 25% of the semester due to your military absence.*
- *Contact your faculty and dean's office to let them know you will miss class and/or may withdraw.*
- *Review UT's [Notice for Students Who Withdrew Due to Military Service](#) for information about declaring your intent to re-enroll if you anticipate withdrawing due to your military service.*

*Student Veteran Services will inform Student Emergency Services and the UT Veteran Certifications on your behalf once we receive your information. Please DO NOT withdraw until advised to so by Student Veteran Services.*

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