

THE PATRIOT POLL

Prepared for



Prepared by

**EXCELSIOR COLLEGE
POLLING INSTITUTE**

December 2012

Statement of Confidentiality and Ownership

All of the analyses, findings and recommendations contained within this report are the exclusive property of Excelsior College.

As required by the Code of Ethics of the National Council on Public Polls and the United States Privacy Act of 1974, The Excelsior College Polling Institute maintains the anonymity of respondents to surveys the firm conducts. No information will be released that might, in any way, reveal the identity of the respondent.

Moreover, no information regarding these findings will be released without the written consent of an authorized representative of Excelsior College.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1

Introduction.....Page 3

SECTION 2

Methodology.....Page 4

SECTION 3

HighlightsPage 6

SECTION 4

Summary of FindingsPage 10

Education..... 10

Field of Study 13

Separation..... 15

School Decision Making..... 15

Tuition and Benefits..... 17

Support..... 19

Communication..... 22

Military Issues 22

SECTION 5

AppendixPage 25

Cross Tabulation Tables

Survey Instrument

Composite Aggregate Data

1 INTRODUCTION

The Excelsior College Polling Institute is pleased to present the results to the College's Patriot Poll - a survey among active duty military personnel nationwide.

The research was designed to collect input on education and career goals.

The research study included a comprehensive online survey. Interviews were conducted among 678 active duty respondents who:

- Currently had a college degree and planned on another;
- Are currently enrolled in a college degree program; or
- Have a desire to complete a college degree but are not currently enrolled.

This report does not include active duty military who have a degree with no plans for more education or those who have no plans for a college degree.

This report summarizes information collected from online surveys conducted November 18 - 22, 2012.

The survey instrument employed in Excelsior College's Patriot Poll included the following areas for investigation:

- Perceptions of the importance of college education;
- Reasons for interest in a college degree;
- Areas of study or majors of interest;
- Plans for work and school after separation;
- Importance of various criteria in selection of a college;
- Awareness of education benefits and understanding of how to secure benefits;
- Importance of family involvement in degree planning and school selection;
- Market for potential employment support opportunities;
- Personal ability to convey military experience to potential career prospects;
- Preferred sources for information about education and degrees; and
- Views on military issues.

Section II of this report discusses the Methodology used in the study, while Section III includes Highlights derived from an analysis of the quantitative research. Section IV is a Summary of Findings for the residential telephone surveys - a narrative account of the data.

Section V is an Appendix to the report containing a cross tabulation table, a copy of the survey instrument, and the composite aggregate data.

METHODOLOGY

Using a quantitative research design, the Excelsior College Polling Institute completed 678 interviews with active duty military personnel nationwide.

All online interviews were conducted November 18 – 22, 2012. Respondents were members of a research panel owned by Survey Sampling International (SSI). The Institute broadcast the email invitation to complete the survey to panel members who previously indicated they were active duty. The survey was held open until 678 surveys were completed. Respondents were incentivized.

Survey input was provided by Excelsior College officials.

Survey design is a careful, deliberative process to ensure fair, objective and balanced surveys. Staff members, with years of survey design experience, edit out any bias. Further, all scales used (either numeric, such as one through ten, or wording such as strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly agree) are balanced evenly. Placement of questions is carefully accomplished so that order has minimal impact.

Respondents qualified for the survey if they were active duty and confirmed they held a college degree and planned another, were currently enrolled in a college degree program or have a desire to complete a college degree but have not enrolled as yet.

A pre-test of the survey instrument occurred on November 18, 2012.

All facets of the study were completed by the Institute's senior staff and researchers. These aspects include: survey design, pre-test, computer programming, fielding broadcast, coding, editing, data entry, verification, validation and logic checks, computer analysis, analysis, and report writing.

Statistically, a sample of 678 surveys represents a margin for error of +/-4.0% at a 95% confidence level.

In theory, a sample of qualifying active duty personnel will differ no more than +/-4.0% than if all qualified active duty personnel were contacted and included in the survey. That is, if random probability sampling procedures were reiterated over and over again, sample results may be expected to approximate the large population values within plus or minus 4.0% -- 95 out of 100 times.

Readers of this report should note that any survey is analogous to a snapshot in time and results are only reflective of the time period in which the survey was undertaken. Should concerted public relations or information campaigns be undertaken during or shortly after the fielding of the survey, the results contained herein may be expected to change and should be, therefore, carefully interpreted and extrapolated.

Furthermore, it is important to note that all surveys contain some component of “sampling error”. Error that is attributable to systematic bias has been significantly reduced by utilizing strict random probability procedures. This sample was strictly random in that selection of each potential respondent was an independent event, based on known probabilities.

Each qualified active duty respondent in the research panel had an equal chance for participating in the study. Statistical random error, however, can never be eliminated but may be significantly reduced by increasing sample size.

HIGHLIGHTS

ON EDUCATION...

- Impressively, 88.4% of all respondents indicated they considered a college degree very (65.8%) or somewhat important (22.6%). Just 8.7% considered a degree somewhat unimportant (6.8%) or not at all important (1.9%).
- Beyond being helpful in securing a quality job or career, respondents also suggested a college degree (in declining order) meets their interests or curiosity, provides pride in achievement, increased salary levels, and a sense of knowledge and confidence.
- Large majorities of respondents reported being very or somewhat aware of salary levels in chosen areas of study and that college credit for time served in the U.S. Military is available – 79.1% and 75.4% respectively.
- There exists strong interest in online courses that allow student to study at their own pace and test when ready. A majority, 81.0%, noted they would be very (48.6%) or somewhat interested (32.4%) in such an opportunity.

ON FIELD OF STUDY...

- In an open-end format question, respondents were asked to report the major(s) or area(s) of study they have started or hold an interest in today. In declining order, the areas of greatest interest include: business/management, medicine/healthcare, criminal justice/law/security, and computer science/IT.

ON SEPARATION...

- The largest group of respondents, 17.7%, expects to work full-time and attend school full-time upon separation from the military. This was followed by those indicating they expect to go to school full-time (16.6%), work part-time and attend school part-time (16.6%). Some, 12.6%, expect to work full-time until they can get school started and others (12.1%) plan to work part-time and attend school full-time.

ON SCHOOL DECISION MAKING...

- The most frequently named factors or criteria in the selection of a school included cost (59.4%) and financial aid (48.8%). These financial factors were followed by: average time to complete a degree (32.4%), career placement rates (31.0%), school's reputation (30.2%) and having their program or major of interest (30.1%).
- While one-third, 33.7%, of all respondents indicated a preference for a four-year public school, one-fifth noted a preference for either a community college or an online four-year school – 20.8% and 19.4%, respectively. Another 13.4% indicated a preference for a four-year private school.
- Respondents appear open to “E-Books” for school courses. Over one-third of respondents, 37.0%, suggested a preference for E-Books while 28.5% held a preference for traditional bound course texts. A significant number of respondents either held no preference (17.0%) or would opt for the less expensive of the two (12.5%). Some, 5.1%, were unsure.

ON TUITION & BENEFITS...

- Nearly half of all respondents, 49.4%, indicated they are aware of VA Benefits and plan to use them. Another 27.3% noted they are eligible for more than one benefit while 20.6% suggested being unsure of their respective VA benefits or don't know how to use them. Some, 10.9% expressed concern over a one-time irrevocable decision on a program choice without more information. Others, 7.5%, noted they no longer have any VA Benefit.
- Interestingly, many respondents reported a willingness to personally supplement tuition bills if assistance is, someday, reduced or eliminated. Over one-quarter, 28.0% would be willing to pay \$101-\$200 per course personally. Another 24.6% were willing to pay up to \$100 per course while 20.2% noted they would pay \$201-\$300 per course. Only 10.0% would not be willing to make up the difference for such a reduction in assistance.
- For many, 79.5%, a 10% to 15% tuition discount would make the difference when choosing between two similar schools. Some, 14.5%, said such an offer would not likely make a difference to them.
- Awareness for different issues or factors surrounding tuition funding was moderate or good. Over three-quarters, 78.6% suggested they understood the Military education benefits available to them very well or well. Another 75.5% understood the differences between the GI Bills very or somewhat well. Nearly two-thirds, 65.0%, suggested “very or somewhat well” when asked about mixing, matching and combining military and VA benefits. And, 67.7% said the same about the process for securing GI Bill education benefits after active duty.

ON SUPPORT...

- While 13.1% indicated spouse or family involvement in college degree planning and school selection was somewhat unimportant or not at all important, 73.6% suggested such support was either very or somewhat important.
- Nearly one-third of all respondents had been approached, with offers of help finding a school or planning work on a degree from college representatives or U.S. Military personnel – 30.9% and 30.6% respectively. Some, 16.9%, received offers of help from Department of Defense civilian and contract employees. Another 16.2% said they have received no offers and 5.3% were unsure. In all, 78.4% were approached with an offer of assistance.
- Researchers presented nine different employment support opportunities respondents might use upon separation. The strongest interest was recorded for on job and career counseling (47.4%), interviewing skills (38.8%), how to start a business (32.9%), and education counseling (32.7%).
- Similar percentages, 34.3% and 34.1% wanted to receive desired employment support “in-person” or “online”, respectively. Another 14.1% suggested the support they preferred would vary or depend. Some, 10.5%, expressed an interest in a “CD” while 6.9% noted “other”.
- Importantly, over three-quarters of all respondents, 77.3%, indicated they believed they could convey, to a potential employer, how their military experience applies to the job or career sought. However, nearly one-fifth (18.6%) noted “not very well” or “not at all”. When extrapolated on the total population of military at separation, the percent, 18.6%, is large.

ON COMMUNICATION / SOURCES FOR INFORMATION...

- Researchers offered respondents 12 different sources for information about education and college degrees. Each was asked to name the most effective ways to reach them personally. In declining order, respondents offered social media (43.9%), online advertising (33.6%), professional organizations (33.0%), and print advertising (27.7%). Billboards near military bases and Military officers were named as least effective – 15.1% and 10.8% respectively.

ON MILITARY ISSUES...

- Would they do it over again? Impressively, 78.4% of all active duty respondents surveyed suggested they would make the same decision to join the U.S. Military if they had it to over again.
- Results were mixed when respondents were asked, after reflection, about their confidence in elected officials in Washington, D.C. to make important war and peace decisions. Nearly half (43.7%) indicated their confidence has increased or remained the same but high. Another 48.2% suggested their confidence has decreased or remained the same but low.
- Just over two-thirds, 69.7%, of all respondents suggested they have either strong confidence (29.8%) or some confidence (39.9%) that their Military education benefits will be disbursed in a timely fashion as needed when they separate.

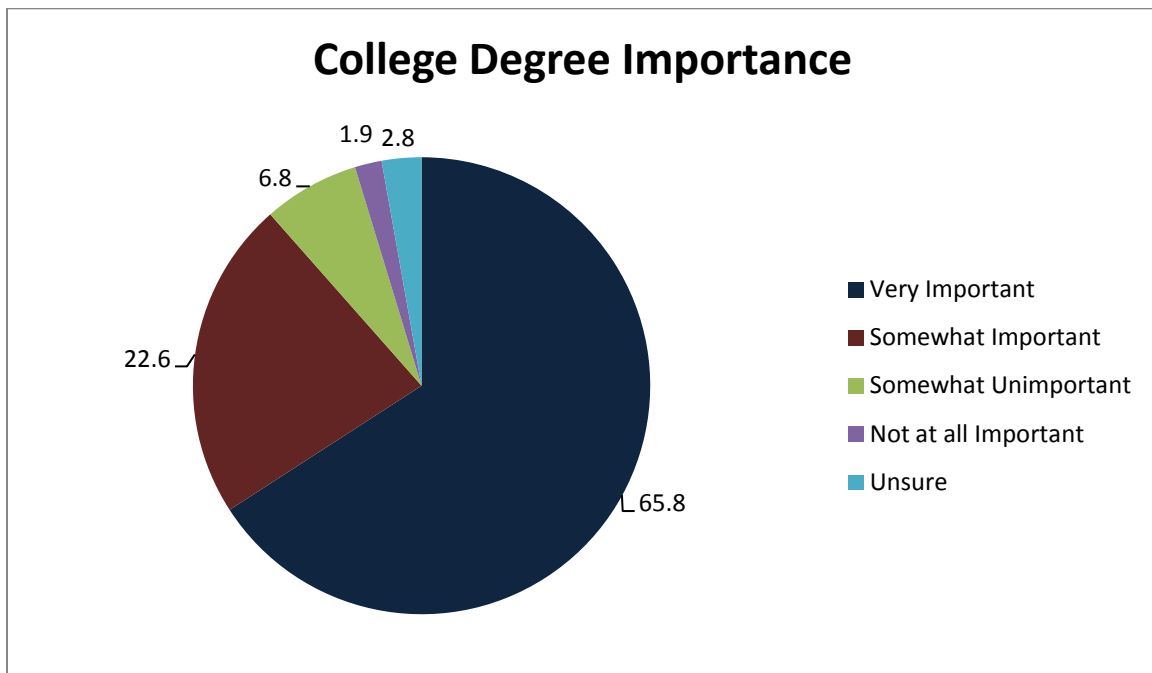
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Readers are reminded that the following section summarizes statistics collected from online surveys among 678 active duty military personnel nationwide who have a degree and plan a second, are currently enrolled in a degree program or have a desire to enroll in a degree program but have not yet.

EDUCATION

Respondents were asked to indicate how important a college degree was in the pursuit of a quality job or career. A large majority, 88.4%, suggested they considered a college degree very (65.8%) or somewhat important (22.6%). Results are presented in the following table as collected.

Importance of a College Degree?	Percent
Very important	65.8
Somewhat important	22.6
Somewhat unimportant	6.8
Not at all important	1.9
Don't know/unsure	2.8
<i>Total important</i>	<i>88.4</i>
<i>Total unimportant</i>	<i>8.7</i>



Respondents were presented with a list of additional reasons for pursuing or completing a college degree beyond securing a quality job or career. Respondents were asked to select those that applied to them. The following table presents the results as collected. The percent column will add to more than 100% as multiple responses were accepted. Results are presented in declining order.

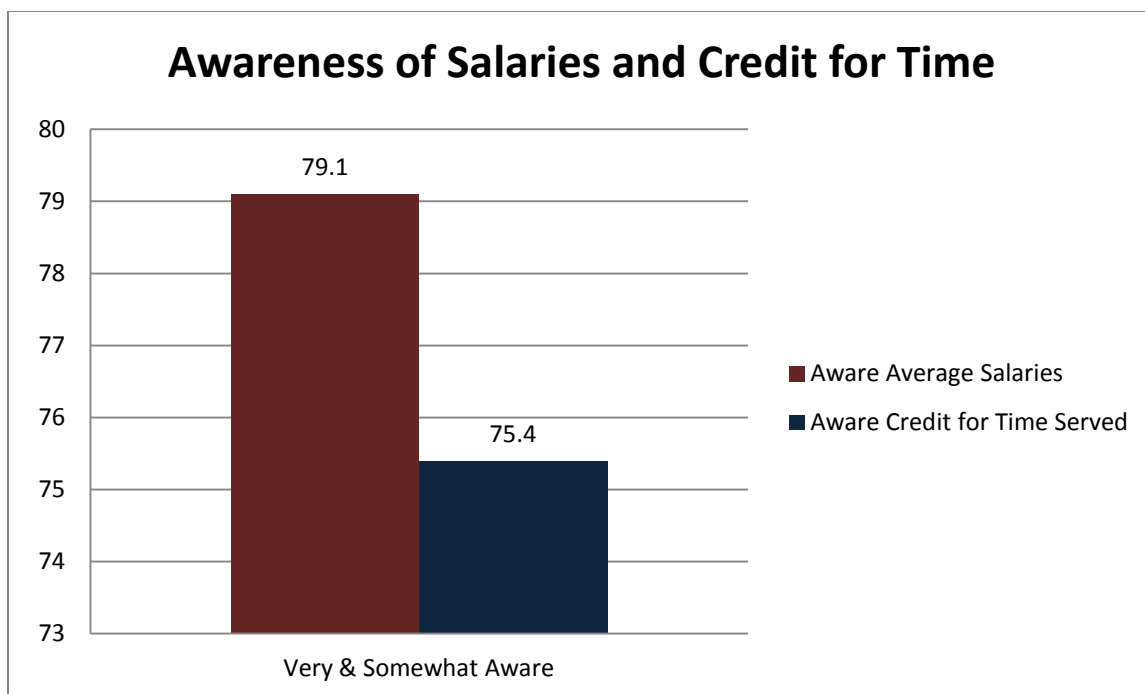
Reasons for a Degree	Percent
Meets my interests / curiosity	54.5
Sense of or pride in achievement	51.3
Salary levels are higher for those with college degrees	43.4
Sense of having that knowledge	41.9
Helps my confidence in my areas of study	40.4
A sound post-secondary education equips me as a stronger citizen and contributor to society	37.5
Status	33.1
A degree is required for my interest area(s)	26.9
No other reasons	1.8
Don't know	1.4

Over three-quarters of all respondents, 79.1% suggested they were very (46.1%) or somewhat aware (33.0%) of the average salary levels attained in their area(s) of interest or study. Results are displayed in the following table.

Aware of Salary Levels in Chosen Area of Study	Percent
Very aware	46.1
Somewhat aware	33.0
Somewhat unaware	13.0
Not at all aware	3.9
Don't know/unsure	3.9
<i>Total aware</i>	<i>79.1</i>
<i>Total unaware</i>	<i>16.9</i>

Just over three-quarters, 75.4%, indicated they were very (42.5%) or somewhat aware (32.9%) of the availability of college credit for time served in the U.S. Military. Results are depicted in the following table.

Aware of College Credit for Time Served	Percent
Very aware	42.5
Somewhat aware	32.9
Somewhat unaware	12.8
Not at all aware	8.0
Don't know/unsure	3.9
<i>Total aware</i>	<i>75.4</i>
<i>Total unaware</i>	<i>20.8</i>

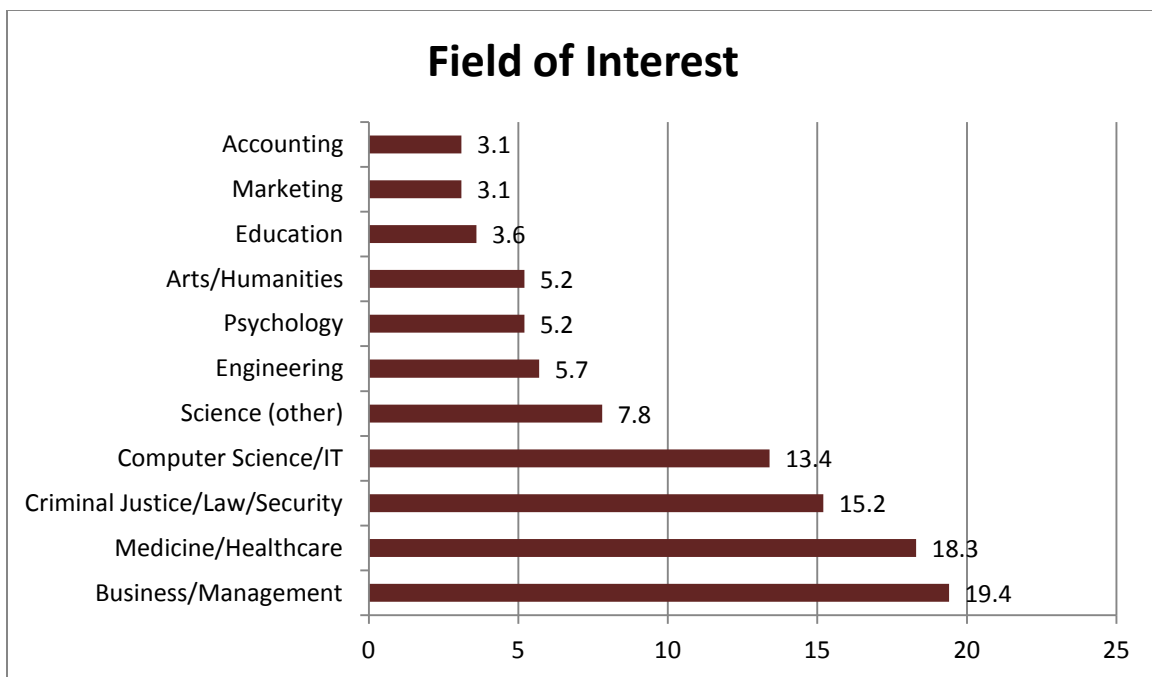


Strong interest was recorded for online courses that allowed students to study at their own pace and test when ready. A majority, 81.0%, indicated they would be very (48.6%) or somewhat interested (32.4%) in such an opportunity. Results are shown in the following table.

Study at Your Own Pace Courses	Percent
Very interested	48.6
Somewhat interested	32.4
Somewhat uninterested	9.0
Not at all interested	6.1
Don't know/unsure	3.9
<i>Total interested</i>	<i>81.0</i>
<i>Total uninterested</i>	<i>15.1</i>

FIELDS OF STUDY

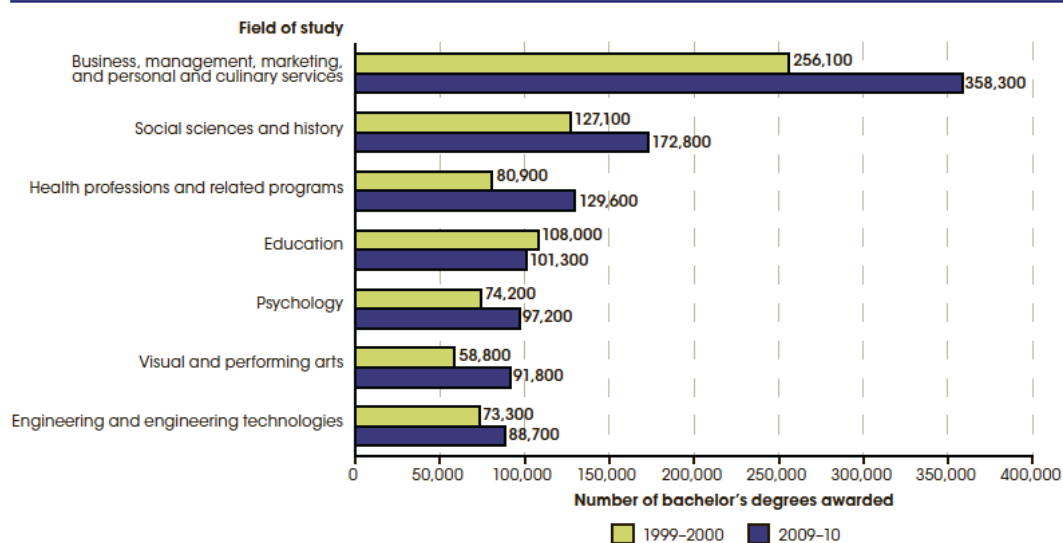
In an open-end format question, respondents were asked to report the major(s) or area(s) of study they have started or hold an interest in today. A total of 499 valid responses were recorded. The following graph presents the most frequently named majors or areas of interest for study.



Other fields of study with less frequency of mention included: culinary, theology, religion, wildlife conservation, automotive, racing, political science, environmental, and design.

The United States Department of Education shows Bachelor degrees awarded by “Field of Study” in the time frames of 1999-2000 and 2009-2010 within the following table.

Figure 38-1. Number of bachelor's degrees awarded by degree-granting institutions in selected fields of study: Academic years 1999-2000 and 2009-10



NOTE: Includes only institutions that participated in Title IV federal financial aid programs. The new Classification of Instructional Programs was initiated in 2009-10. Estimates for 1999-2000 have been reclassified when necessary to conform to the new taxonomy. For more information on the classification of postsecondary education institutions, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*. For more information on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Fall 2000 and Fall 2010. Completions component.

SEPARATION

Survey respondents were asked which of several options best described their current plans for education and work following separation from the U.S. Military. The following table presents the results as collected. The table is presented in declining order.

Plans for Education and Work Post Separation	Percent
Full-time work and full-time school	17.7
School full-time	16.6
Part-time work and part-time school	16.6
Full-time work until have time to get school started	12.6
Part-time work and full-time school	12.1
Part-time school and full-time work	11.0
No plans yet	6.1
Don't know / Unsure	4.5
For the short term, a certificate or credentials to secure employment	2.7

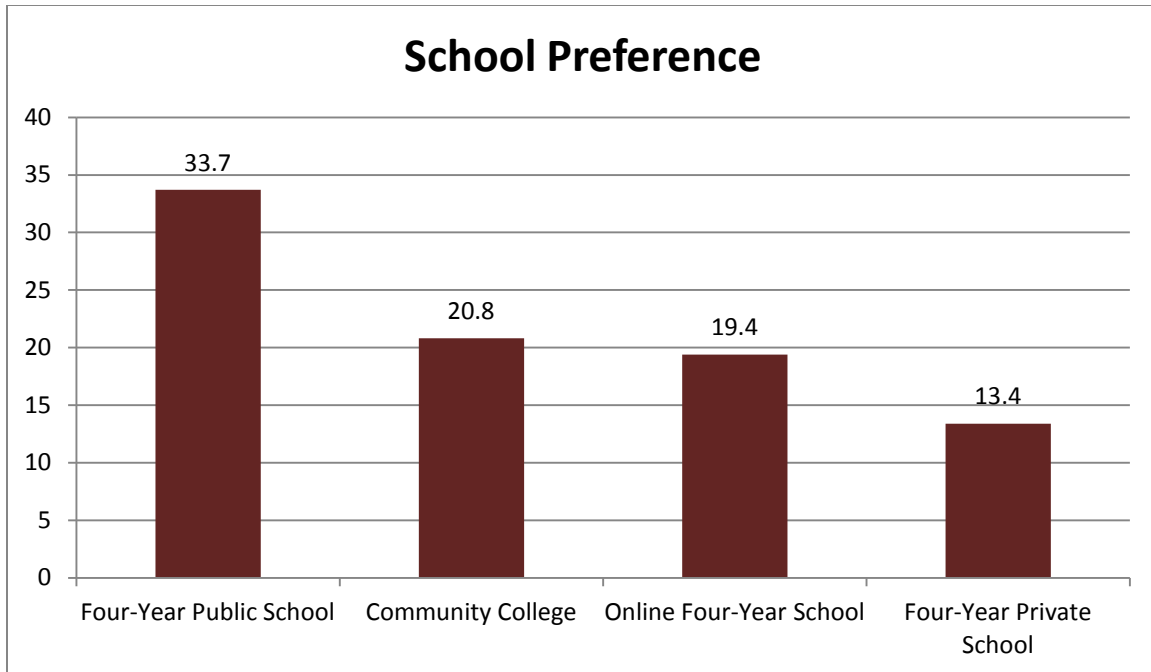
SCHOOL DECISION MAKING

Respondents were provided with a list of different criteria potentially used when selecting a school. Each was asked to select the criteria or factors most important to them in their own decision making process. Respondents were encouraged to select all that applied.

The following table holds the responses collected in declining order by frequency of selection.

Factors or Criteria in Selection of a School	Percent
Cost	59.4
Financial aid	48.8
Average time to complete a degree in my major	32.4
Career placement rate	31.0
School's reputation	30.2
Has your program - major of interest	30.1
Provides quality education	26.7
Willingness to incorporate GI Bill education benefits	25.7
Graduation rate	25.1
Starting salaries in my major/program	22.0
Prominence of the school	14.9
It's a four year school	12.5
A public school	9.1
It's a two year school	8.8
It's for-profit	5.5
A private school	5.0
It's non-profit	4.9

Respondents were asked if they were enrolled in or preferred a community college, a four-year public school, a four-year private school or an online four-year school. The following graph presents the results as collected.



Respondents were asked, in an open-end format question, why they selected the type of college setting they did.

Reasons for selecting a community college centered mostly on (in declining order): cost, convenient location, has program of interest and easier.

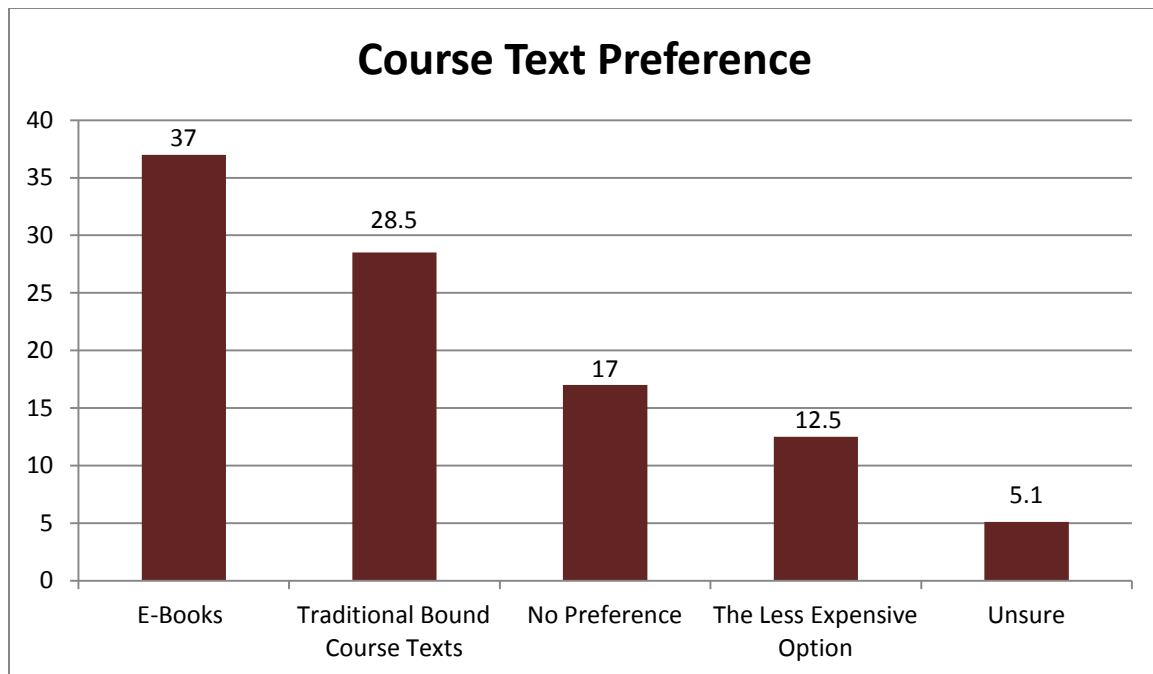
Reasons for selecting a four-year public school centered on: cost/value, quality education and desire for a four-year degree.

For a four-year private school, primary reasons cited included: quality of education, like private schools more, just “better”, better job/pay afterwards, and reputation.

On-line four-year schools were selected primarily for: being easier/more convenient and less time consuming, easier to work while enrolled, flexibility and working at your own pace.

In an effort to discover preferences between “E-Books” or traditional course books, respondents were asked if they would prefer “E-Books” sent online to their respective computers/iPads/Kindles or traditional texts.

The following graph presents the results as collected.

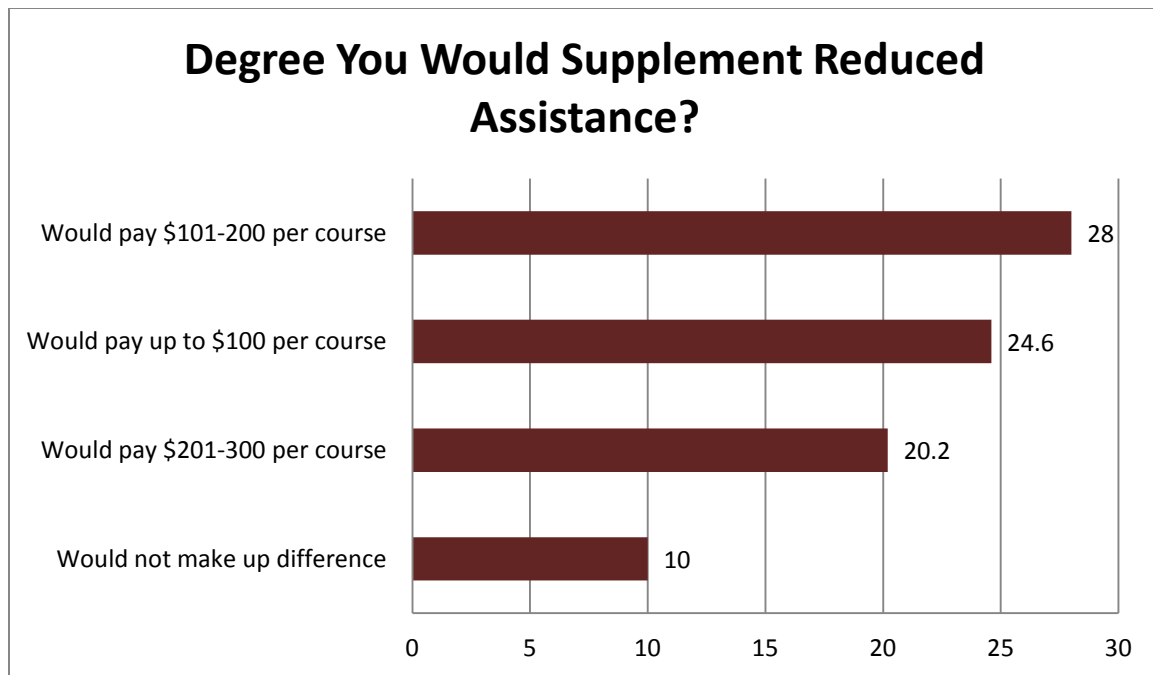


TUITION AND BENEFITS

Respondents were asked to report their current plans for and understanding of their GI Bill Benefits. The following table holds the results. Multiple responses were allowed.

Plans for and Understanding of GI Bill Benefits	Percent
I am aware of VA Benefits and plan to use them	49.4
I am eligible for more than one VA benefit	27.3
I am unsure of my VA benefits and/or don't know how to use them	20.6
It concerns me making a one-time irrevocable decision on which program to choose without more information	10.9
I no longer have any VA Benefit	7.5
Don't Know / Unsure	7.8

Nearly three-quarters of all respondents, 72.8%, suggested that they would personally pay varied amounts up to \$300.00 per course if tuition assistance is, someday, reduced or eliminated. Results are presented in the following graph.



Respondents were asked, when deciding between two similar schools to attend, how likely a 10% to 15% tuition discount offer would be in influencing their decision. A large majority, 79.5%, suggested such an offer would very or somewhat likely influence their decision. The following table presents the results as collected.

Likelihood a 10% to 15% Tuition Discount Could Influence Decision on School Selection	Percent
Very likely	38.6
Somewhat likely	40.9
Somewhat unlikely	9.9
Not at all likely	4.6
Don't know/unsure	6.0
<i>Total likely</i>	<i>79.5</i>
<i>Total unlikely</i>	<i>14.5</i>

The survey held four issues or factors surrounding tuition funding. Respondents were asked to read the four and report how well they understood each – very well, somewhat well, not very well or not at all. The fourth column presents the cumulative totals for those suggesting very and somewhat well.

Tuition Factor Understanding	Very Well	Somewhat Well	Very and Somewhat Well
The differences between the GI Bills such as the Montgomery GI Bill, Post 9/11 Benefits.	40.3	35.3	75.5
The Military education benefits available to you personally	37.4	41.2	78.6
How to mix, match and combine military and VA education benefits	30.9	34.1	65.0
The process for securing GI Bill education benefits after active duty	30.8	36.9	67.7

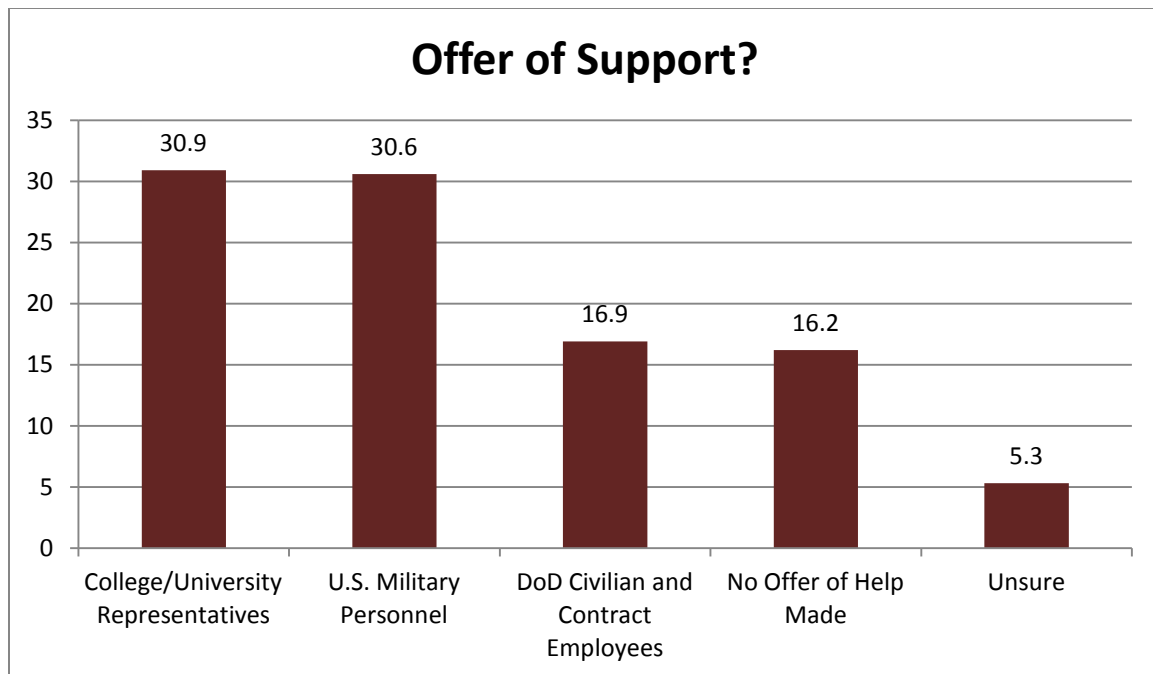
SUPPORT

Just under three quarters of all respondents, 73.6%, indicated it was either very or somewhat important that relatives or a spouse be involved in their own college degree planning and school decision making. The following table holds the results collected.

Importance of Relative or Spouse Input on Degrees/Colleges	Percent
Very important	33.7
Somewhat important	39.9
Somewhat unimportant	10.7
Not at all important	2.4
Don't know/unsure	---
<i>Total important</i>	<i>73.6</i>
<i>Total unimportant</i>	<i>13.1</i>

Respondents were asked who or what organizations might have approached them with offers to help find a school or begin planning work on a degree. While 16.2% indicated there was not offer of support made, another 78.4% were approached with an offer of support.

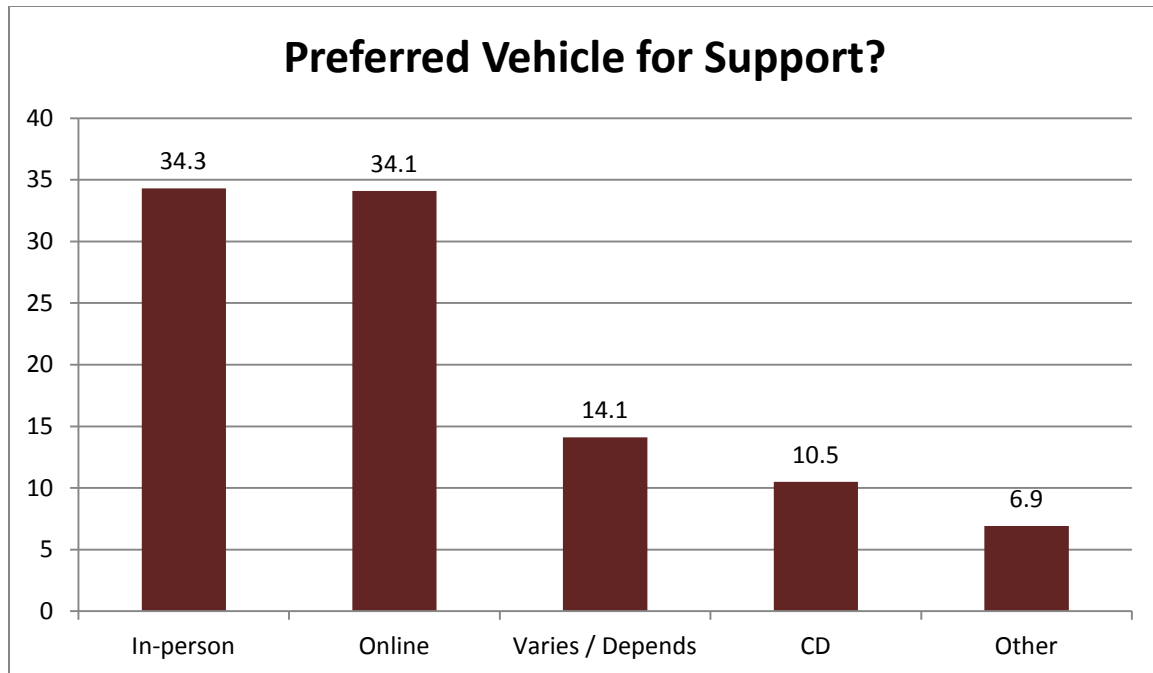
The following graph presents the results collected.



In an effort to discover the market for various employment support opportunities upon separation, respondents were asked which of nine might be of interest. Multiple responses were allowed and results are presented here in decline order.

Support Opportunities	Percent
Job and career counseling	47.4
Interviewing skills	38.8
How to start a business	32.9
Education counseling	32.7
Training toward a professional certificate to help secure a job	29.6
Financial counseling	27.3
Resume development	23.7
Presenting your military skills effectively	20.8
Psychological counseling for help in transitioning to civilian life	19.4

The largest group of respondents, 34.3%, indicated they would like to receive the employment support they named “in-person”. This was followed closely by those suggesting a preference for online delivery (34.1%). The follow graph depicts preferences for receipt of support desired.



Over three-quarters of all respondents, 77.3%, suggested they could convey, to a potential civilian employer, how their military experience applies to the job or career.

Results are shown here.

How Well You Could Convey Your Military Experience?	Percent
Very well	41.8
Somewhat well	35.6
Not very well	13.6
Not at all	5.0
Don't know/unsure	4.1
<i>Total well</i>	<i>77.3</i>
<i>Total not well</i>	<i>18.6</i>

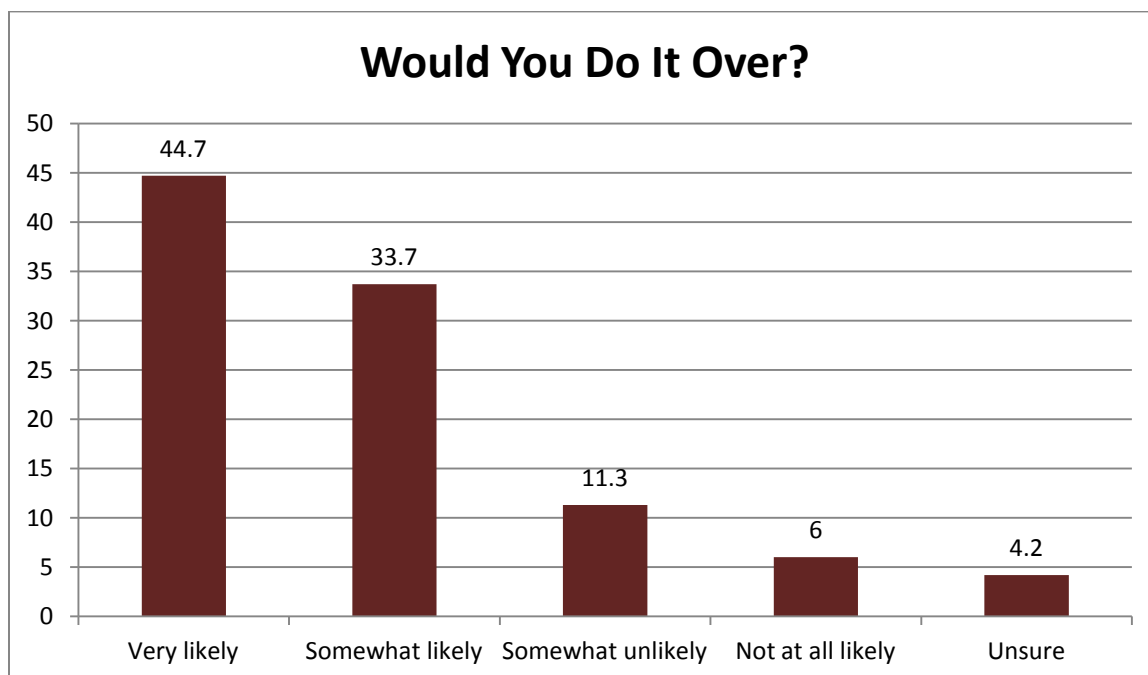
COMMUNICATION / SOURCES FOR EDUCATION INFORMATION

The survey included 12 different potential ways to reach them with information about education and degrees after active duty. Each was asked to name the most effect ways to reach them personally. Multiple responses were accepted and the results are presented in declining order of preference.

Most Effective Ways to Reach Respondents	Percent
Social media such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn	43.9
Online advertising	33.6
Professional organizations	33.0
Print advertising	27.7
Radio and TV advertising	25.6
Military family centers	24.8
Military events	24.0
Veterans organizations such as VFW, American Legion, IAVA, NCOA	22.0
Ads or signs on military bases	18.5
Education Service Officers/Counselors at Military Education Centers	17.3
Billboards near military bases	15.1
Officers / Senior Officers	10.8

MILITARY ISSUES

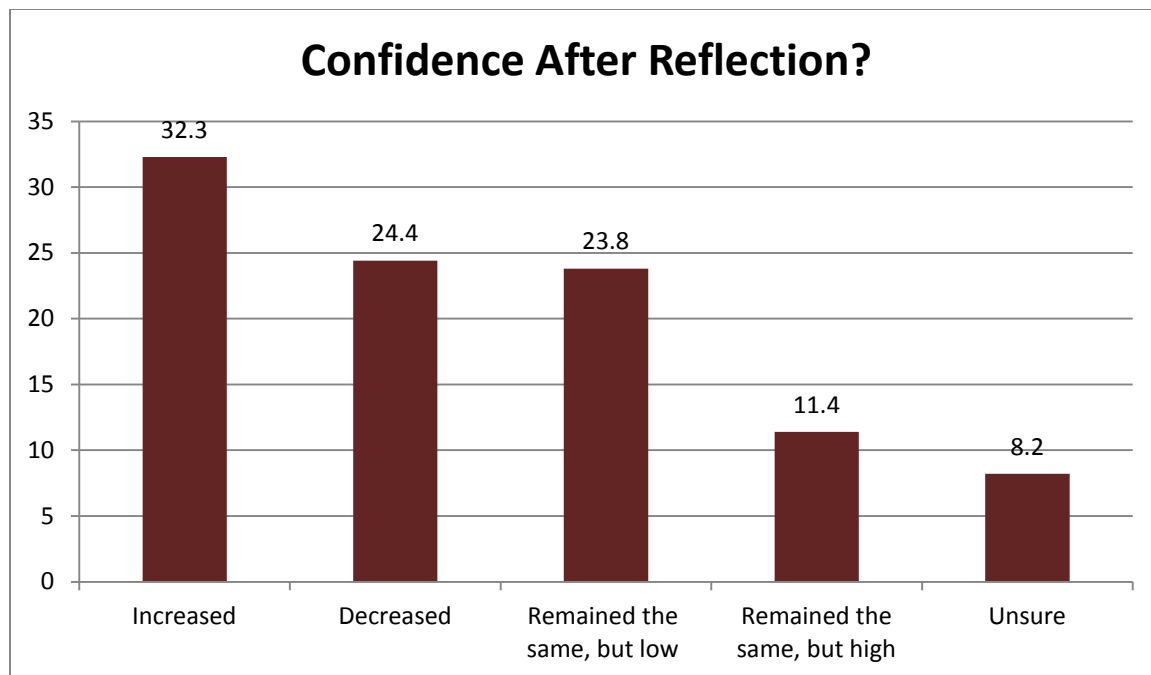
Would they do it over again? A large majority of active duty respondents, 78.4%, suggested they would make the same decision to join the U.S. Military. Just over two-fifths, 44.7%, indicated they would very likely make the same decision to join while 33.7% suggested they were somewhat likely.



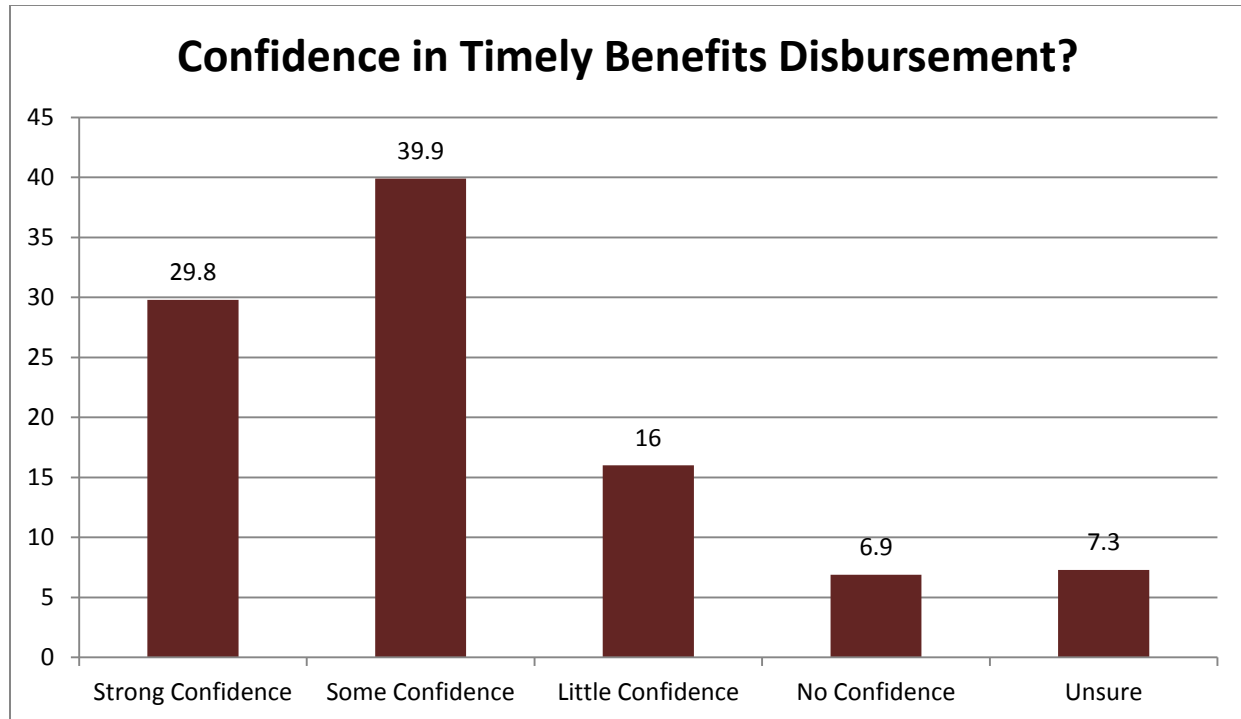
The survey included the following question...

“Many elected officials in the U.S. Congress and those who serve as President come to office with limited military knowledge or personal experience. After reflection, please think about your confidence in U.S. **elected** officials’ in making important war and peace decisions. Since you began serving has your confidence...”

Results were mixed. Nearly half (43.7%) indicated their confidence increased or remained the same but high. Another 48.2% suggested their confidence decreased or remained the same but low. Results are presented here.



Just over two-thirds of all respondents, 69.7%, indicated they had strong confidence (29.8%) or some confidence (39.9%) their Military education benefits will be disbursed in a timely fashion as needed. Results are held in the following graph.



APPENDIX

INTERPRETATION OF AGGREGATE RESULTS

The computer processed data for this survey are presented in the following frequency distributions. It is important to note that the wordings of the variable labels and value labels in the computer-processed data are largely abbreviated descriptions of the Questionnaire items and available response categories.

The frequency distributions include the category or response for the question items. Responses deemed not appropriate for classification have been grouped together under the “Other” code.

The “NA” category label refers to “No Answer” or “Not Applicable.” This code is also used to classify ambiguous responses. In addition, the “DK/RF” category includes those respondents who did not know their answer to a question or declined to answer it. In many of the tables, a group of responses may be tagged as “Missing” – occasionally, certain individual’s responses may not be required to specific questions and thus are excluded. Although when this category of response is used, the computations of percentages are presented in two (2) ways in the frequency distributions: 1) with their inclusion (as a proportion of the total sample), and 2) their exclusion (as a proportion of a sample sub-group).

Each frequency distribution includes the absolute observed occurrence of each response (i.e. the total number of cases in each category). Immediately adjacent to the right of the column of absolute frequencies is the column of relative frequencies. These are the percentages of cases falling in each category response, including those cases designated as missing data. To the right of the relative frequency column is the adjusted frequency distribution column that contains the relative frequencies based on the legitimate (i.e. non-missing) cases. That is, the total base for the adjusted frequency distribution excludes the missing data. For many Questionnaire items, the relative frequencies and the adjusted frequencies will be nearly the same. However, some items that elicit a sizable number of missing data will produce quite substantial percentage differences between the two columns of frequencies. The careful analyst will cautiously consider both distributions.

The last column of data within the frequency distribution is the cumulative frequency distribution (Cum Freq.). This column is simply an adjusted frequency distribution of the sum of all previous categories of response and the current category of response. Its primary usefulness is to gauge some ordered or ranked meaning.

The Patriot Poll

The Excelsior College Polling Institute

Fall 2012 – FINAL

The Excelsior College Polling Institute needs your help. We are conducting a national survey of active duty military personnel to collect information about your views on education, career goals and interests, education plans and decision making, understanding of tuition and education benefits, and your views on military issues.

Results will help education planners meet your needs, interests and support requirements as you transition to civilian life. Your own responses to this important online survey are strictly confidential. At the end, you will be asked if you would like to receive a copy of the final results. Thank you very much.

Screener

A. Please indicate which of the following best reflects where you are currently in your education process.

- 01 Currently have a college degree and have no plans for additional education (Terminate)
- 02 Currently have a college degree and plan on another degree (Go to Q1)
- 03 Currently enrolled in a college degree program at a college (Go to Q1)
- 04 Have a desire to get or complete a college degree but not currently enrolled (Continue)
- 05 Have no plans for a college degree (Terminate)

B. Please indicate the reasons why you are not currently enrolled in a college degree program. **Please indicate all the reasons that apply.**

- 01 No time
- 02 Don't know where or how to start
- 03 The cost
- 04 Not certain what I want to study yet
- 05 Currently prohibited by my military obligations
- 06 Want to wait and focus on a degree when my service ends
- 07 Don't want to start if I can't finish
- 08 Other: _____

Education

1. In your view, how important is a college degree in the pursuit of a quality job or career? Would you say...

- 01 Very important;
- 02 Somewhat important;
- 03 Somewhat unimportant; or
- 04 Not at all important.
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

2. Some see reasons for a degree beyond helping secure a quality job or career. In your view, which of the following do you believe are additional reasons you would pursue or complete your degree?

Please indicate all that apply.

- 01 Meets my interests/curiosity
- 02 A sound post-secondary education equips me as a stronger citizen and contributor to society
- 03 Sense of or pride in achievement
- 04 Helps my confidence in my areas of study
- 05 Status
- 06 Sense of having that knowledge
- 07 Salary levels are higher for those with college degrees
- 08 A degree is required for my interest areas
- 09 No other reasons
- 10 Don't Know/Unsure

3. Generally, how aware would you say you are of the average salary levels attained, in your area of study interest, by those with and without college degrees? Would you say...

- 01 Very aware;
- 02 Somewhat aware;
- 03 Somewhat unaware; or
- 04 Not at all aware.
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

4. How aware are you of the availability of college credit for time served in the U.S. Military? Would you say...

- 01 Very aware;
- 02 Somewhat aware;
- 03 Somewhat unaware; or
- 04 Not at all aware.
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

5. You may have an opportunity to take online courses that allow you to study at your own pace and take exams only when you are ready. How interested would you say you would be in such an approach to a college degree? Would you say...

- 01 Very interested;
- 02 Somewhat interested;
- 03 Somewhat uninterested; or
- 04 Not at all interested.
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

Field of Study

6. Please indicate the major(s) or area(s) of study you have started or have an interest in today. Feel free to name as many as you have an interest in.

Separation

7. Which one of the following best describes your current plans for education and work when you separate from the U.S. Military?

- 01 School full-time;
- 02 Part-time work and part-time school;
- 03 Part-time work and full-time school;
- 04 Part-time school and full-time work;
- 05 Full-time work and full-time school;
- 06 Full-time work until have time to get school started;
- 07 For the short term, a certificate or credentials to secure employment; or
- 08 No plans yet.
- 09 Don't Know/Unsure
- 10 Other:_____

School Decision Making

8. People make decisions based on different criteria when selecting a school. Please indicate which of the following factors were or are most important to you in your decision making process. **Please indicate all that apply.**

- 01 Cost
- 02 Financial aid
- 03 Average time to complete a degree in my major
- 04 Graduation rate
- 05 Career placement rate
- 06 Starting salaries in my major/program
- 07 Prominence of the school
- 08 School's reputation
- 09 Willingness to incorporate GI Bill education benefits
- 10 Has your program - major of interest
- 11 Provides quality education
- 12 It's for-profit
- 13 It's non-profit
- 14 A public school
- 15 A private school
- 16 It's a four year school
- 17 It's a two year school
- 18 Other: _____

9. Which of the following would you say you are currently enrolled in or most interested in...

- 01 A community college;
- 02 A four-year public school;
- 03 A four-year private school; or
- 04 An online four-year school.
- 05 Other: _____
- 06 Don't Know/Unsure

10. Regarding your answer to the previous question, please explain why?

11. You may have a choice between “E-Books” or traditional course texts at your chosen school or in chosen courses. While some may prefer “E-Books” sent online to your computer or iPad/Kindle because they cost less than traditional texts, others prefer to study using traditional texts. Please indicate your own preference.

- 01 Traditional bound course texts
- 02 E-Books sent electronically to my own devices/computer
- 03 No preference
- 04 Whichever is less expensive
- 05 Don’t Know/Unsure

Tuition and Benefits

12. Which of the following best describes your current plans for and understanding of your GI Bill Benefits? **Please indicate all that apply.**

- 01 I am aware of VA Benefits and plan to use them;
- 02 I am eligible for more than one VA Benefit;
- 03 I am unsure of my VA benefits and/or don’t know how to use them;
- 04 It concerns me making a one-time irrevocable decision on which program to choose without more information;
- 05 I no longer have any VA Benefit.
- 06 Don’t Know/Unsure

13. If tuition assistance is; someday; reduced or eliminated which of the following best reflects your response?

- 01 Would personally pay up to \$100 per course;
- 02 Would personally pay \$101-\$200 per course;
- 03 Would personally pay \$201-300 per course; or
- 04 Would not make up the difference personally.
- 05 Don’t Know/Unsure

14. If you were deciding between two similar schools to attend for your degree, how likely would a 10% to 15% tuition discount offer, by one of the two, be to influence your decision? Would you say...

- 01 Very likely;
- 02 Somewhat likely;
- 03 Somewhat unlikely; or
- 04 Not at all likely.
- 05 Don’t Know/Unsure

The following are a number of issues or factors surrounding tuition funding. Please tell us how well you understand each by indicating very well, somewhat well, not very well or not at all.

Tuition Factor Understanding	Very Well	Somewhat Well	Not Very Well	Not At All	Don't Know/Unsure
15. The differences between the GI Bills such as the Montgomery GI Bill, Post 9/11 Benefits.	01	02	03	04	05
16. The Military education benefits available to you personally	01	02	03	04	05
17. How to mix, match and combine military and VA education benefits	01	02	03	04	05
18. The process for securing GI Bill education benefits after active duty	01	02	03	04	05

Support

19. How important is it to you to have your relatives or spouse involved in your degree planning and school decision making? Would you say...

- 01 Very important;
- 02 Somewhat important;
- 03 Somewhat unimportant; or
- 04 Not at all important.
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

20. While serving you may have been approached with offers to help you find a school or begin planning to work on a degree. Please indicate those who may have approached you. **Please indicate all those that apply.**

- 01 U.S. Military personnel
- 02 DoD Civilian and Contract Employees
- 03 College/University representatives
- 04 Other: _____
- 05 No offer of support made
- 06 Don't Know/Unsure

21. The following are a number of potential support opportunities that may be available to you upon separation. Please **indicate all those that would be of interest** to you upon completion of your service.

- 01 Interviewing skills
- 02 Education counseling
- 03 Job and career counseling
- 04 How to start a business
- 05 Training toward a professional certificate to help secure a job
- 06 Psychological counseling for help in transitioning to civilian life
- 07 Financial counseling
- 08 Resume development
- 09 Presenting your military skills effectively
- 10 Other: _____

22. And, generally speaking, how would you like to receive the support you indicated in the previous question?

- 01 Online
- 02 In-person
- 03 A CD
- 04 Varies/Depends
- 05 Other: _____
- 06 Don't Know/Unsure

23. If asked today by a potential employer, how well would you say you could describe how your military experience applies to a civilian job or career? Would you say...

- 01 Very well;
- 02 Somewhat well;
- 03 Not very well; or
- 04 Not at all.
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

Communication / Sources for Education Information

24. The following are a number of ways to reach you with information about education and degrees after you leave active duty. Please **indicate all that would be effective** in reaching you.

- 01 Social media such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn
- 02 Professional organizations
- 03 Print advertising
- 04 Online advertising
- 05 Radio and TV advertising
- 06 Ads or signs on military bases
- 07 Billboards near military bases
- 08 Military family centers
- 09 Military events
- 10 Veterans organizations such as VFW, American Legion, IAVA, NCOA
- 11 Officers / Senior Officers
- 12 Education Service Officers/Counselors at Military Education Centers
- 13 Other: _____

Military Issues

25. You've served in the U.S. Military for some time and likely had time to reflect on your decision to join. Based on your experiences and what you know now, how likely would you have been to make the same decision to join? Would you say...

- 01 Very likely;
- 02 Somewhat likely;
- 03 Somewhat unlikely; or
- 04 Not at all likely.
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

26. Many elected officials in the U.S. Congress and those who serve as President come to office with limited military knowledge or personal experience. After reflection, please think about your confidence in U.S. **elected** officials' in making important war and peace decisions. Since you began serving has your confidence...

- 01 Increased;
- 02 Decreased;
- 03 Remained the same but low confidence;
- 04 Remained the same but high confidence;
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

27. Regarding your Military education benefits, how much confidence do you have that your benefits will be disbursed in a timely fashion as needed? Would you say...

- 01 Strong confidence;
- 02 Some confidence;
- 03 Little confidence; or
- 04 No confidence.
- 05 Don't Know/Unsure

Demographics

And now a few questions for statistical purposes only.

28. What is your highest grade of school completed?

- 01 Some high school
 - 02 High school graduate or GED
 - 03 Some technical school**
 - 04 Technical school graduate
 - 05 Some college
 - 06 College graduate – Two Year (Associate's)
 - 07 College graduate – Four Year (Bachelor's)
 - 07 Post-graduate or professional degree
 - 08 Don't know/Unsure
-

29. Please indicate your age.

- 01 _____

30. Please indicate your current pay grade.

- 01** _____
- 02 Don't Know/Unsure

31. Please indicate the number of months you have served in the U.S. Military.

- 01 _____
- 02 Don't Know/Unsure

32. Have you served overseas?

- 01 Yes

- 02 No
- 03 Scheduled to deploy

33. Please indicate your marital status.

- 01 Married
- 02 Divorced
- 03 Single
- 04 Widow/Widower
- 05 Separated

34. Please indicate the number of months left in your current commitment.

- 01 _____
- 02 Don't Know/Unsure

35. Are you active guard or reserve?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No

36. Finally, would you like to have results to this survey emailed to you?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS
IMPORTANT SURVEY**