

# Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Administration and Management of the Graduate Education Voucher (GEV) Program

October 2006

**NOTE: OPNAV INSTRUCTION 1520.37 PROVIDES GEV POLICY, INFORMATION AND PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE.**

1. As an officer selected for off-duty graduate education under the Graduate Education Voucher (GEV) Program, you will soon be returning to the academic world for what should be a rewarding experience. Preparing for graduate school requires a careful definition of professional objectives for graduate study. The following information provides guidance and specific instructions regarding academic program planning, education plan preparation, academic standards, tuition payment, reimbursable expense procedures, and actions necessary at program completion.

## 2. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GEV SELECTEE

a. Preliminary Planning: Most schools require the results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or Graduate Management Aptitude Test (GMAT). Please note, however, that the GRE is the most commonly required general examination among universities. Contact your local Navy College Office (NCO) for details and confirm specific requirements with your school(s) of choice to ensure you satisfy their specific entrance/application requirements.

b. Choosing a School: Selecting an institution and getting acceptance should be the first priority. You should start the planning effort in earnest by obtaining catalogs, course descriptions, and admission forms to the graduate schools within a 50 mile radius of your duty station since travel is not authorized in the GEV program except for distance learning programs. Additionally, most universities now offer "Distance Learning" opportunities that may also be applicable to the GEV program. The graduate program must be from an educational institution accredited by a regional accrediting agency, recognized by the U. S. Department of Education (DOE).

Upon notification of your selection to the GEV program, you should start preparing your education plan package for submission to the GEV Program Office.

c. Curriculum Approval: Of the utmost importance to begin receiving funding through the GEV program is the timely submission of all required paperwork, of which the cornerstone is your Education Plan (EP). You must submit a request to Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD), VOLED Detachment, ATTN: GEV, for the evaluation of your proposed program, along with the following documents:

(1). Proposed Education Plan: The Education Plan (EP) is the basis for tracking and documenting your academic progress and funding authorization requests while earning a graduate degree and subspecialty code. **The EP is not considered complete unless it lists all**

the courses in your program of study, including those you have already taken, and the estimated costs of each course.

When listing courses and estimated cost, include only estimated cost for tuition and books. Do not include the cost for computers, travel, lodging, meals, etc (Review document "How To Fill Out the Education Plan"). Your academic advisor must sign the EP. If you choose to take additional courses outside of the assigned degree to earn a second degree, for professional development, etc., you will be responsible for payment of these courses.

Travel will be authorized for those fulfilling residency requirements while pursuing a degree through Distance Learning. If you will have travel related to your GEV participation, whether traditional or distance learning program, you must include this in the comments section on the last page of the EP. Please include the number of times you will travel and the approximate cost involved. Authorized program travel may not be approved if it is not listed on the EP.

Program funding must be approved prior to travel. Although it is difficult to project future costs, we request that you give us an estimate. Approximately two months prior to your TAD travel refer to the GEV Travel page and follow the procedures for having travel approved.

NOTE: Only the cost of courses and authorized expenses fulfilling educational skill requirements (ESR) for the applicable subspecialty code approved in the EP are payable by GEV. You may enroll/participate in unapproved courses at your own expense only if the additional courses/activities/programs will not delay the completion of your program. If courses approved in the EP are not offered during a given academic term, or if other unusual circumstances exist, you must contact the NCO before registering for courses not approved in the EP. Tuition Assistance is not authorized while participating in the GEV program.

(2). Course Description: A description of each course listed on the plan must accompany the EP. This is normally found in the university's course catalog or on their website. The course descriptions are required for the sponsors at Naval Postgraduate School to cross-reference your classes with the Education Skill Requirements (ESR). Your "Navy relevant" graduate education program must meet the Educational Skill Requirements (ESR) for at least one approved Navy subspecialty. Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) will recommend the appropriate subspecialty code based on the degree listed on your EP. The Education Skill Requirements (ESR) for specific subspecialties is listed in the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Catalog, and are available for review on the NPS website: <http://web.nps.navy.mil>.

CPPD, VOLED Detachment, GEV will respond to GEV participants with NPS approval/disapproval of your proposed program and make

recommendations ensuring your program is "Navy relevant" and meets the requirements for one of the Navy subspecialty codes as outlined in the current fiscal year NAVADMIN.

(3). Undergraduate Transcript: This may be used by NPS in recommending the subspecialty code, and an official copy is not required.

d. GEV Tuition Voucher:

(1) When requesting GEV tuition voucher, submit a completed GEV request to your local Navy College Office (NCO) and obtain authorization prior to the beginning of coursework using the "Application for Graduate Education Voucher," along with your approved EP. GEV is not authorized for courses not listed in your EP nor for courses started or completed prior to your official acceptance into the GEV Program AND approval of your EP, as evidenced by the start date entered into NCMIS.

(2) GEV Participants must deliver GEV Authorization Voucher to the school during registration.

(3) Enrollment in a course not listed on the GEV Authorization Form is authorized if it is included on your EP and there is no cost increase. The NCO must be notified of the change prior to attending class.

e. Academic Standards: GEV Participants are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA.

f. Grade Reports: Upon the completion of each semester please mail or fax transcript and/or grade report to Center for Personal and Professional Development (CPPD), Voluntary Education (VOLED) Detachment, ATTN: GEV, 6490 Saufley Field Rd, Pensacola, FL 32509, 850-452-1272, DSN 922-1272

g. Repetition of Courses: When repeating a course for the purpose of improving a grade, GEV Participants are responsible for incurring the expense of that course.

h. Student Waivers: In most states, active duty Armed Forces members enrolled as full-time students qualify for a waiver of out-of-state/non-resident fees. To obtain this benefit you must request a waiver. **Many universities also waive health fee charges for the military. It is your responsibility to provide the university with proof of active duty status so the Navy is not billed. Failure to request a waiver of non-resident and health fee charges may result in you being billed for these charges.**

i. Authorized Expenses:

(1) GEV benefits may only be used to fund courses that are part of the participant's NPS-approved EP. GEV will not fund any course started or completed prior to the participant's official acceptance into the GEV program and approval of the EP. Participants whose graduate

education program costs exceed either the annual fiscal year limit of \$20,000 or the total program limit of \$40,000 must fund the remainder of the expenses using personal funds. (NOTE: Navy tuition assistance is not authorized while participating in GEV).

(2) Required fees normally charged by the university relating directly to student application and enrollment, including mandatory health fees and health insurance, laboratory fees, vehicle registration and identification cards, and computer fees are reimbursable. The purchase of a computer, whether required or not, is the responsibility of the individual student and is not reimbursable. **If you will receive a computer as a result of paying tuition for a course it must be noted in the comment section of the EP.**

Other reimbursable expenses include:

- (1) One school application fee and one transcript fee.
- (2) Cost of two final transcripts with degree conferred.
- (3) Cost of services in connection with final thesis, such as reproduction and binding, not to exceed \$150.
- (4) Actual cost of books for your courses. Optional expenses such as meal and bus passes and athletic fees are your responsibility and are not reimbursable.

j. Reimbursements: Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures (SF-1164) should be submitted each semester/quarter you enroll in a course. Submit the SF1164 with your original signature and original receipts to CPPD, VOLED Detachment, ATTN: GEV, 6490 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, FL 32509-5204. Since Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) is the prescribed method of payment for reimbursements to individuals, bank account information must accompany your first claim. Submit a voided personal check with your first claim to the address listed above. The voided check will remain on file for the duration of your program.

If you change checking accounts, you will need to provide a voided personal check from your new account. The bank routing number and your account number must be plainly visible. Deposits made to an incorrect account are very difficult to recover. Failure to provide complete and accurate payment information will result in delay of the reimbursement.

k. Travel Procedures: Travel is authorized for Distance Learning programs to satisfy residency requirements **ONLY**. Contact the GEV office if you are in a traditional program that requires travel.

l. Final Transcript: Upon completion of your degree, you must have one (1) official transcript noting the degree conferred, forwarded to CPD, Voluntary Education Detachment, ATTN: GEV. The GEV Office will then forward a copy to NPS and NPS will recommend the appropriate subspecialty code for entry into your service record. Your final transcript is required to ensure all grades are posted and to close your GEV status, allowing eligibility for other Navy College Program assistance. Officers must update their Officer Data Card (ODC) with degree awarded.

m. Feedback Letter: A letter report assessing your academic accomplishments, as well as strengths and weaknesses of your program, must be submitted to the GEV office at the completion of your program. The report helps evaluate the quality of education you received. [Sample feedback letter](#).