Understanding Military Culture: Part I

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In collaboration with:
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Why Learn About Military Culture?

1. Helps you tailor programs, strategies and interventions to better serve military-affiliated students
2. Helps you communicate more effectively
3. Helps students feel understood and respected
Defining a Military-Affiliated Student

Service Members, Veterans and Dependents
Defining a “Service Member”

Active Service
  ◦ Active Duty
  ◦ Reserve
  ◦ National Guard
Defining a “Veteran”

The VA’s general definition is:

◦ **Veteran Eligibility**: For the purposes of VA health benefits and services, a person who served in the active military service and who was discharged or released under conditions other than *dishonorable* is a Veteran.

◦ **Minimum Duty Requirements**: Most Veterans who enlisted after September 7, 1980, or entered active duty after October 16, 1981, must have served 24 continuous months or the full period for which they were called to active duty in order to be eligible.
Defining a “Dependent”

“Dependent” is a government definition used to determine eligibility for benefits

- Spouse (including same sex spouses)
- Children
- Step-children
Defining a “Military-Affiliated Student”

*Those who are excluded from government eligibility definitions can still be impacted emotionally:

1. Those with “Other than Honorable” Discharges
2. Siblings
3. Parents
4. Non-married individuals with partners in service

Comprehensive military background policies could inform work with all of these students who might be on your campus.
U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves and National Guard - New York Population

Population

- Army Active Duty: 19,980
- Navy Active Duty: 2,184
- Air Force Active Duty: 327
- Marine Active Duty: 698
- Coast Guard Active Duty: 1,117
- Selected Reserve: 30,577
- Army National Guard: 10,648
- Air National Guard: 6,297

Source: Map from the New York State Division of Military & Naval Affairs
Veteran Populations in NYS by County
Total Population 921,400
Est. 90% Male

Vietnam- 270,300
Korean War- 111,700
Gulf War-era I (ended 2001) 102,300
Gulf era II- 96,500
World War II- 77,200
Peacetime = 262,100

Data from 2013, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
According to SUNY, Estimated Number of Military-Affiliated SUNY Students

8,000-10,000
Military Culture
Reasons for Joining

- To serve your country and protect your country’s liberty and freedom
- Travel the world
- Help stop terrorism
- College education
- Get a good paying job
- Duty and Honor for your country
- Family Tradition
- To improve yourself and learn new skills
- Get a career
- Turn your life around
Military as a Unique Culture

The military setting has many of the core elements characterizing distinct cultures

- Ceremonies, Rituals, Rites, and Celebrations
- Symbols, Artifacts, and Symbolic Actions
- Histories, Stories, Legends, & Myths
- Beliefs, Values, and Attitudes
- Rules, Taboos, Laws, & Ethical Codes
- Language
- Technology
Military Culture - Values and Beliefs

- Discipline
- Teamwork
- Loyalty
- Freedom
- Honor
- Respect

- Duty
- Selfless Service
- Integrity
- Personal Courage
- Integrity
Branches of Services

- United States Army
  - Inception: 14 June 1775
- United States Navy
  - Inception: 13 October 1775
- United States Marine Corps
  - Inception: 10 November 1775
- United States Coast Guard
  - Inception: 4 August 1790
- United States Air Force
  - Inception: 18 September 1947
## Military Components – Federal and State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>State</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Duty</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reserve</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>Navy</td>
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<tr>
<td>USMC</td>
<td>USMC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coast Guard</td>
<td>Coast Guard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air Force</td>
<td>Air Force</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## MOS - Military Occupational Specialty

- Accounting, Budget, and Finance
- Business Administration and Operations
- Construction, Building, and Extraction
- Education and Training
- Health Care Practitioners
- Intelligence
- Legal Professions and Support Services
- Naval and Maritime Operations
- Arts, Communication, Media, and Design
- Counseling, Social Work, and Human Services
- Law Enforcement, Security, and Protective Services
- Mechanic and Repair Technicians
- Aviation
- Culinary
- Combat Arms
Basic Training/Induction

Initial Entry Training/Boot Camp is an intensive residential program normally lasting several weeks

- Aims to induct newly recruited military personnel into the social norms and essential tasks of the armed forces by way of:
  - Confinement and Suppression
  - Control and Conformity
  - Stress and Punishment
  - Bonding and the Hierarchy of Esteem
  - Fieldcraft and Fitness
  - Graduation and Drop-out
Chain of Command

- Military-affiliated students are used to this model of communication
- May create challenges in communicating
- Taught to handle issues at the lowest level
- May prevent them from asking for help

Rules around Chain of Command:
- Disrespecting an Officer
- “Jumping” the Chain of Command
- Fraternization
Ranks

Enlisted

Enlisted are the backbone of the military. They have specific specialties within a military unit.

Commissioned Officer

Officers act as managers to the enlisted. They plan missions, give orders, and assign tasks. Enlisted execute those tasks.
Rank Insignia of the U.S. Armed Forces

**ENLISTED**

**Army**

- E-1: Private E-1 (Pvt)
- E-2: Private E-2 (Pfc)
- E-3: Private First Class (Pfc)
- E-4: Corporal (Cpl)
- E-5: Sergeant (Sgt)
- E-6: Sergeant First Class (Sfc)
- E-7: Staff Sergeant (Ssgt)
- E-8: Sergeant Major (Sgm)
- E-9: Sergeant Major of the Army (Sma)

**Marines**

- E-1: Private (Pvt)
- E-2: Private First Class (Pfc)
- E-3: Lance Corporal (Lcpl)
- E-4: Corporal (Cpl)
- E-5: Sergeant (Sgt)
- E-6: Sergeant First Class (Sfc)
- E-7: Staff Sergeant (Ssgt)
- E-8: Sergeant Major (Sgm)
- E-9: Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps (SmaMC)

**Air Force**

- E-1: Airman Basic (Abr)
- E-2: Airman (Airmen)
- E-3: Airman First Class (A1C)
- E-4: Airman Senior (SrA)
- E-5: Staff Sergeant (Ssgt)
- E-6: Technical Sergeant (Tech Sgt)
- E-7: Master Sergeant (Msrsg)
- E-8: First Sergeant (1st Sgt)
- E-9: Sergeant First Class (Sfc)

**Navy**

- E-1: Seaman Recruit (Sr)
- E-2: Seaman Apprentice (SaA)
- E-3: Seaman (Sn)
- E-4: Petty Officer Third Class (Pc3)
- E-5: Petty Officer Second Class (Pc2)
- E-6: Petty Officer First Class (Pc1)
- E-7: Chief Petty Officer (CPO)
- E-8: Senior Chief Petty Officer (Scpo)
- E-9: Master Chief Petty Officer (Mcpo)

**Coast Guard**

- E-1: Seaman Recruit (Sr)
- E-2: Seaman Apprentice (SaA)
- E-3: Seaman (Sn)
- E-4: Petty Officer Third Class (Pc3)
- E-5: Petty Officer Second Class (Pc2)
- E-6: Petty Officer First Class (Pc1)
- E-7: Chief Petty Officer (Cpo)
- E-8: Senior Chief Petty Officer (Scpo)
- E-9: Master Chief Petty Officer (Mcpo)

**OFFICERS**

**Army - Air Force - Marines**

- 0-1: Second Lieutenant (2Lt)
- 0-2: First Lieutenant (1Lt)
- 0-3: Captain (Cpt)
- 0-4: Major (Maj)
- 0-5: Lieutenant Colonel (Lcpl)
- 0-6: Colonel (Col)
- 0-7: Brigadier General (Brig)
- 0-8: Major General (Maj Gen)
- 0-9: Lieutenant General (Ltg)
- 0-10: General (Gen)

**Navy - Coast Guard**

- 0-1: Ensign (Ensign)
- 0-2: Lieutenant Junior Grade (Ltjg)
- 0-3: Lieutenant (Lt)
- 0-4: Lieutenant Commander (Lcdr)
- 0-5: Commander (Cdr)
- 0-6: Captain (Capt)
- 0-7: Rear Admiral Lower Half (Rahlf)
- 0-8: Rear Admiral Upper Half (Rauf)
- 0-9: Vice Admiral (VAdm)
- 0-10: Admiral (Adm)

**W-1: Warrant Officer**

- 0-1: Warrant Officer (W1)
- 0-2: Chief Warrant Officer (CWO)
- 0-3: Master Warrant Officer (Mwto)
- 0-4: Command Chief Warrant Officer (CWO1)

**W-2: Warrant Officer**

- 0-1: Warrant Officer (W2)
- 0-2: Chief Warrant Officer (CWO)
- 0-3: Master Warrant Officer (Mwto)
- 0-4: Command Chief Warrant Officer (CWO1)

**W-3: Warrant Officer**

- 0-1: Warrant Officer (W3)
- 0-2: Chief Warrant Officer (CWO)
- 0-3: Master Warrant Officer (Mwto)
- 0-4: Command Chief Warrant Officer (CWO1)

**W-4: Warrant Officer**

- 0-1: Warrant Officer (W4)
- 0-2: Chief Warrant Officer (CWO)
- 0-3: Master Warrant Officer (Mwto)
- 0-4: Command Chief Warrant Officer (CWO1)

**W-5: Warrant Officer**

- 0-1: Warrant Officer (W5)
- 0-2: Chief Warrant Officer (CWO)
- 0-3: Master Warrant Officer (Mwto)
- 0-4: Command Chief Warrant Officer (CWO1)
Military Rules/Taboos

Uniformed Code of Military Justice (UCMJ)

- 134 Articles
- Examples:
  - Article 15: Nonjudicial punishment
  - Article 91: Insubordinate conduct toward Warrant Officer, Noncommissioned Officer, or Petty Officer
    - (1) strikes or assaults a warrant officer, noncommissioned officer, or petty officer, while that officer is in the execution of his office;
    - (2) willfully disobeys the lawful order of a warrant officer, noncommissioned officer, or petty officer; or
    - (3) treats with contempt or is disrespectful in language or deportment toward a warrant officer, noncommissioned officer, or petty officer while that officer is in the execution of his office;
Terminology

- DD214 - Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty
- Service Connected Disability
- Rank - A position of hierarchy in the military
- Officer vs Enlisted
- Branch of Service
- Duty Station - where one is stationed
- Deployed
- Activated
- Soldier vs Marine
- Sailor vs Airman
- Officer vs Enlisted
- Sergeant (middle management and the backbone of the military)
- Theatre - Combat area
- Sand Box - Iraq/Afghanistan
## Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PCS</td>
<td>Permanent Change of Station</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leave</td>
<td>Off Duty (usually vacation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEB</td>
<td>Medical Evaluation Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>AWOL</td>
<td>Absent without Leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOB</td>
<td>Forward Operating Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IED</td>
<td>Improvised Explosive Device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIF</td>
<td>Operation Iraqi Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEF</td>
<td>Operation Enduring Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OND</td>
<td>Operation New Dawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRE</td>
<td>Meal Ready to Eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre</td>
<td>Combat area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sand Box</td>
<td>Iraq/Afghanistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCMJ</td>
<td>Uniformed Code of Military Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>Annual Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSD</td>
<td>Reserve Duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAD</td>
<td>State Active Duty</td>
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<tr>
<td>TDY</td>
<td>Temporary Duty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTA</td>
<td>Unit Training Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA</td>
<td>Veteran Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoD</td>
<td>Department of Defense</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So at 1700 hours we were pullin' into the LZ when we saw this technical closing on our go, so we buttoned it up and waited until we saw the helo comin' in hot. Then we...

Uh... just a second... that's like... 5 o'clock right??
"15 minutes prior to 15 minutes prior"
“Blue Falcon”
"Embrace the suck"
"Back on the block"
“Rub some dirt on it”
Deployment
Deployment - Characteristics

- Deployments can be during combat, humanitarian emergencies, or peacetime

- Deployment can happen anywhere in the world

- With increasing technology, combat can happen anywhere. i.e., Drones
Deployment Cycle of a Military-Affiliated Student

Pre-Deployment
- Up to six months prior to deployment
- Major stressor
- Impacts academic success
- “Physically present, psychologically absent”

Deployment
- Major stressor
- Requires leave of absence from college
- “Psychologically present, physically absent”

Post-Deployment
- Major stressor
- Transitional challenges associated
- Reintegration challenges back into college
- “Physically present, psychologically absent”
## Top 5 Military Stressors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stressor</th>
<th>Active Duty Members</th>
<th>Military Spouses</th>
<th>Veterans</th>
<th>Veteran Spouses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deployments</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Issues/Stress</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relocation Stress</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation from Family and Friends</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse Employment</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worries about Children (Parent Time Away and Impact of Military Life)</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Childcare</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital or Relationship Issues</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deployment-Experience

- Physical demands (intense heat, need to wear heavy body armor)
- Exhaustion
- Extreme boredom
- Home/civilian concerns
- Increased means of communication has pros and cons
- Transition to home/civilian life
Deployment - Experience

**Potential** repeated exposure to trauma:

- Constant sense of threat - hypervigilance as necessary state for survival
- Witnessing violence
- Experiencing violence
“We don’t all come back broken”
Military Culture

• Military culture is heterogeneous.

• Gender, gender identity, ethnic and racial background, sexual orientation, religious affiliations, etc. intersect with military identity.

• Service Member, Veteran or family member can have many different experiences depending on own subculture, branch, job, unit atmosphere.

• Military culture is voluntary. The extent that one takes on this identity is fluid.