

## Hello from your UNC School Certifying Officials!

We wanted to give you some updates for the Spring 2021 semester since many of you are registering for courses. We know it can be difficult to navigate how any COVID-related issues may affect your schedules and eligibility for Veteran Education Benefits.

Below, we briefly explain how the method of delivery of courses ("resident" or "distance") may affect Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA). These definitions may have affected your Fall 2020 MHA and may affect your Spring 2021 MHA. We want you to be informed as you register for Spring 2021.

School Certifying Officials do not determine eligibility for benefits; School Certifying Officials only report certifiable enrollment information to the VA. Please see your Certificate of Eligibility (COE) for benefits information, or you can check your remaining benefits online at [eBenefits](#).

These definitions are for students utilizing Chapter 33 (Post 9/11) benefits. Please see this tool for other Chapter of Benefits: <https://www.va.gov/gj-bill-comparison-tool/>

## What's in this Email?

1. Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) Explained
2. COVID Changes in Fall 2020 (recap)
3. How to Check Your Spring 2021 Classes for Possible Impact to MHA

## 1. Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA) Explained

In general, how does the VA determine Monthly Housing Allowance for Chapter 33 (Post 9/11)? How does "resident" versus "distance"\* delivery of courses affect MHA?

For students taking **at least one** course in a part of term (dates of course) delivered as an "in person" course or a "**resident**" course, the VA may pay at the MHA rate for the zip code of the campus (Greeley, Denver, Colorado Springs) for that part of term.

*Example:*

- Student taking 12 credits (3 credits resident, 9 credits distance)
- VA may pay at zip code rate because at least one course is in residence for that part of term

For students taking **all** courses in a part of term delivered via "**distance**" learning or "online", the VA may pay a flat rate, typically 50% of the national average.

*Example:*

- Student taking 12 credits (12 credits distance)
- VA may pay at the lower flat rate because no courses are in residence for any parts of term

\* Resident and Distance examples are given in "3. How to Check Your Spring 2021 Classes for Possible Impact to MHA"

## 2. COVID Changes in Fall 2020 (recap)

How were courses certified for Fall 2020 when a course was **changed** from "resident" to "distance" **due to COVID**? (Instructors MAY be contacting you with details about how we're going to finish after Thanksgiving, but if the class was already classified as "resident," it will remain certified to VA as a "resident" class.)

For Fall 2020, if a required course was changed from "resident" to "distance" **AND** that change was because of COVID, SCOs were able to designate that course to the VA as a "resident" course.

*Example:*

- Student originally taking 12 credits (9 credits resident, 3 credits distance)
- SCO reports to VA that student enrolled in at least one course as "resident"
- VA may pay MHA at zip code rates
- CHANGE to delivery method **due to COVID**
- Same student now enrolled in 12 credits (12 credits are now distance due to COVID)
- SCO confirms "resident" course status due to COVID
- VA may continue to pay MHA at zip code rates

## 3. How to Check Your Spring 2021 Classes for Possible Impact to MHA

How will courses be certified for Spring 2021?

Required courses will be certified to the VA **as they currently appear in the schedule**. At this point, there are no changes to the Spring 2021 schedule due to COVID. If you are enrolled in only "distance" courses, you may qualify for the MHA rate that is "half the national average."

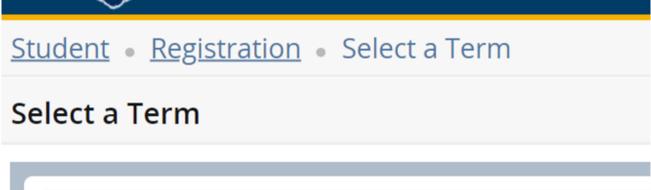
If later in the spring semester, a required course is changed from "resident" to "distance" and the change is documented as COVID related, the course will be reevaluated for how it is reported to the VA.

Not sure how your courses are currently scheduled? Resident or Distance? Here's how to find out:

First, go into URSA and "Browse Classes":



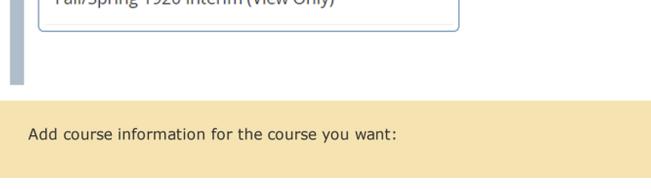
Select your semester:



Add course information for the course you want:



Look at the Instructional Method under the Class Details:



This is not a complete list, but some of the most common Instructional Methods are below:

Correspondence	Distance
Directed Study	Resident
Distance/Online	Distance
Face to Face	Resident
Independent/Directed Study	Resident
Internship/Practica	Resident
Mixed Face to Face	Resident

## We're here for you!

We cannot predict if methods of course delivery will change for Spring 2021, how they may change, or why they may change.

Therefore, as you plan your schedule, please **do not assume** that you will later qualify for a different housing rate.

We know this is a lot of information, so please don't hesitate to reach out to us with questions.

Kind regards,

School Certifying Officials  
Bear Central Operations  
[VA\\_SCO@unco.edu](mailto:VA_SCO@unco.edu)  
970-351-4862, option #2, then option #5.

[Book an Appointment with an SCO](#)

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