ABSTRACT

Veterans as Teachers? A Qualitative Study of the Inhibitors and Enabling
Factors for OIF/OEF-era Active Duty Veterans to Complete a Teacher Education
Program and Initial Certification Using Military Educational Benefits

Brandon L. Moore, Ph.D.

Mentor: Tony L. Talbert, Ed.D.

Over two million veterans returning from Afghanistan and Iraq may be coming to
American colleges and universities as a result of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Veterans have
education benefits available to them, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, Post-9/11 GI Bill
and, if they joined from Texas, the Hazlewood Exemption. With the shortage of teachers
in high-needs schools and in areas of need, such as math and science, veterans provide a
population from which to draw teachers. Research on military veterans becoming
teachers indicates that they exhibit the characteristics sought in effective teachers. This is
a multiple-case study of enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era enlisted, active duty
veterans enrolled in a teacher education program leading to initial certification, with both
sites identified as veteran-friendly universities. The research reveals similarities in why
the participants chose to become a teacher as well as seven inhibitors that make it
difficult for student veterans to complete a teacher education program. In addition, seven
enablers were also identified that help student veterans overcome the inhibitors. The

findings have implications for veterans, schools of education, colleges and universities, and the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs.

Veterans as Teachers? A Qualitative Study of the Inhibitors and Enabling
Factors for OIF/OEF-era Active Duty Veterans to Complete a Teacher Education
Program and Initial Certification Using Military Educational Benefits

by

Brandon L. Moore, B.A., M.A.

A Dissertation

Approved by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

_____
Larry J. Browning, Ed.D., Chairperson

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved by the Dissertation Committee

_____
Tony L. Talbert, Ed.D., Chairperson

_____
Brooke E. Blevins, Ph.D.

_____
Larry J. Browning, Ed.D.

_____
Sandra B. Cooper, Ph.D.

_____
Kathy A. Whipple, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School
August 2013

_____
J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

Page bearing signatures is kept on file in the Graduate School.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to give all glory to God, as he has enabled me and my family to continue on this epic journey through many trials and tribulations. To Jesus we give all the glory. This degree has taken an amazing amount of energy, zeal, and sacrifice by everyone in my family, and for that I am eternally grateful. Leone, you are the light of my life, which would be worthless without you in it every single day. Thank you for helping me become the man I have always wanted to be. Madalyn, you are an amazing person who is smart, articulate, and fun to be around. Elizabeth, you are our funny, insightful, and wonderful daughter with a huge heart. Last but not least, Carter Jay, you are truly the boy of the family who makes us complete with your great sense of humor, abilities, and love for all around you. It is to you four that I dedicate this dissertation. I love you all so much.

I want to thank my mother, Beth Slettedahl, who believed in me and held me accountable after I dropped out of high school and got into a whole lot of trouble. Thank you for making me get a full-time job and going back to alternative school to finish my junior year and supporting me through graduation. Thank you again for helping me get through college. I could not have done it without your help. It means more than I could ever say. I also want to thank my dad, Bob Moore, for your unwavering support in helping us to move to Waco and for listening to me talk about my dissertation all the time.

I have to thank my commanding officer in the Marine Corps, Edward Sullivan, for believing in me and making me take the SAT while I was enlisted. Without that step,

I never would have even considered college.   I must thank the undergraduate professors who have had an important impact on my development as a person and a teacher. Lloyd Petersen, you continue to be an inspiration and role model as a husband, father, teacher, and professor. Vicky Brockman, thank you so much for pushing me continually to pursue my Ph.D. It worked! Tom Born, thank you for tirelessly guiding and advising me through the Summary Paper process for my Master's Degree.

Sean Foster, thank you so much for supporting the strangers who moved in across the street by taking care of our kids, picking them up from school, and helping us in countless ways, most important of which is being a true friend. Without you, I would not have been able to stay enrolled and complete my degree. Finally, I must posthumously thank my best friend, Jay, for being a true friend and for sharing your wonderful family with me. John, Bobbi, Alex, and Reuben, I cannot thank you enough for your support of and belief in our family. We love you all.

Finally, no dissertation would ever be completed without the selfless work of those busy and caring professors who graciously agree to serve on committees.   I have to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. Tony Talbert, for being both a mentor and an advisor during my time at Baylor.   I owe my move to Curriculum & Teaching all to you. Dr. Brooke Blevins, thank you for taking the time to be a mentor as well and for helping me to improve as a scholar. Dr. Larry Browning, Dr. Sandra Cooper, and Dr. Kathy Whipple, thank you all for taking the time to be a part of this project. I truly appreciate your time, effort, and feedback and have a great deal of respect for each of you.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

"So why are you joining the Army?" This is a question that is often asked of young persons joining any branch of the U.S. military. Answers to this question are often personal and can range from a family history of military service to a desire to serve and protect our country. Inevitably, the conversation turns to the education benefits that the military offers to servicemembers. Even if the education benefits are not the main reason for enlisting in the military, they are often one of the ancillary benefits that are referred to as a positive factor that can be used by a veteran upon discharge.

Today's military requires servicemembers to be technically trained and proficient in order to participate (Yonkman & Bridgeland, 2009). The training one receives in the military does not always translate well into a good-paying job in the civilian world, however, which causes many veterans to seek additional training or a college degree upon discharge. Other times, the veteran learns while in the military that he or she wants to pursue a different career track, such as teaching. The education benefits available to veterans of the U.S. armed forces can help pave the way to a different career track for the veteran; ways that would not always have been open had the veteran not had education benefits available.

There are a myriad of reasons to join the military, with education benefits being one among them (Militaryspot.com, 2011; Military.com, n.d.; Thomas, 2009). The education benefits offered to veterans under either the Montgomery GI Bill or Post-9/11 GI Bill constitute a strong push factor to make veterans attend college. Even veterans

who normally would not have considered college as an option have enrolled in college and done well because of the benefits offered under the GI Bill to help defer the cost.

Teaching is a job that gets a lot of media attention, which is not always positive in nature. It is also a profession that does not offer advancement potential or the pay that one can get doing other jobs that require similar training and/or degrees. Therefore, the cost of teaching includes both the costs of college attendance in addition to the opportunity cost included when another career path is foregone. The GI Bill and other education benefits, such as the Hazlewood Exemption, can help alleviate these costs and direct more veterans into the classroom to attend to the teacher shortage experienced on a yearly basis in the United States (Feistritzer, 2005; Rockoff, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF)-era veterans are returning from service in large numbers and rejoining the civilian world, either in jobs or in our colleges and universities (ACE, 2008, 2009). This pool of individuals serves as a potential goldmine of future teachers, as veterans have been found to have the classroom management and planning skills that are effective (Parker, 1992; Watt, 1987) and are sought after by administrators for classroom teachers (Bank, 2007; Owings et al., 2005, 2006). Therefore, exploring and identifying the inhibitors that keep student veterans from completing a teacher education program and enablers that help student veterans from completion is timely and useful at this time.

Background

Educational programs such as the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) and the GI Bill are utilized as a recruiting tool to entice young men and women to join the various branches of the United States military (Militaryspot.com, 2011; Military.com, n.d.). In Texas, there is an additional benefit of joining the military: The Hazlewood Exemption, which provides "an education benefit to honorably discharged or separated Texas veterans and to eligible dependent children and spouses of Texas veterans" (College for all Texans, 2012, para. 1) to attend college at a Texas public college or university free. Young men and women often join the military with the plan that they will serve their enlistment and then continue on to college upon the completion of their duty (Kreisher, 2010; Militaryspot.com, 2011; Military.com, n.d.). These are valuable benefits offered to veterans who may contribute to the teacher shortage by becoming teachers.

Since the original Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, veterans have had a history of completing college (Kiester, 1994). In fact, Kiester (1994) reports that this legislation is credited with producing 238,000 teachers as a result of veterans using it. LaBarre (1985) reports that veterans continue to perform at or above the level of civilian counterparts in college, are career oriented, and that military experience translates well into college success. The American Council on Education (ACE) (2008, 2009) insists that colleges and universities are going to be inundated with veterans in the coming years, as over 2 million veterans return from Iraq and Afghanistan.

There have been several variations of the GI Bill since 1944, each one offering fewer benefits than the original. The Montgomery GI Bill, which has been in effect since 1985, is still an option for veterans to utilize after discharge. This program pays an

allowance to the veteran to attend college, technical school, or to obtain certification

(U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2007). Never in history, since the original

Serviceman's Readjustment Act, have veteran's educational benefits been as lucrative as

they are with the new Post-9/11 GI Bill, passed in 2009. The Post-9/11 GI Bill pays the

full cost of tuition, with a maximum cap, directly to the school, pays an allowance to the

student veteran for books, and pays a housing allowance to the veteran while attending

college (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2012).

Veterans possess qualities that contribute to their effectiveness in the classroom

and research shows that they are successful teachers (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005;

Owings et al., 2005; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002). Recently, programs aimed at targeting

veterans to become school teachers, such as the Troops to Teachers program, have been

developed and successfully implemented (Feistritzer, 2005; Nunnery, Owings, Kaplan, &

Pribesh, 2009; Owings et al., 2006). Troops to Teachers, however, is a small program

mostly for retired veterans who already possess a degree, so it overlooks a large number

of veterans who can use education benefits to attend college to become great teachers.

With 2 million OIF/OEF veterans separating from the military (ACE, 2008, 2009) and

the teacher shortage we are currently experiencing (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Parker,

1992; Rockoff, 2004), especially in high-needs schools and in math and science, veterans

are a great resource pool for effective and successful teachers of our nation's children.

The current study is designed to explore the inhibitors that prevent and enablers

that help enlisted active-duty Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom

(OIF/OEF)-era veterans complete a teacher education program and obtain initial

certification. An OIF/OEF veteran is defined as a person "who served on active duty in a

theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War, or in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998" (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2011b). It is this cohort of veterans that can serve as the next wave of effective classroom teachers, answering the nation's call once again, but in the classroom this time. The inhibitors that veterans face when attending college can keep him or her from completing a degree must be explored to determine how to alleviate the effects of them, allowing veterans to complete a college degree.

Inhibitors for Veterans in College

Recent research reveals that student veterans face several obstacles when attending college. These are problems or issues that can and often do make completing a college degree impossible, resulting in the student veteran leaving college before obtaining a degree. According to the research, these inhibitors can include

- Mental health or health issues (ACE, 2009; DiRamio, Ackerman, and Mitchell, 2008; Hollis, 2009)

- Financial issues (Cook & Kim, 2009; Steele, Salcedo, & Coley, 2010)

- Information and bureaucratic issues (ACE, 2008, 2009; Persky and Oliver, 2011; Steele et al., 2010; Williams & Pankowski, 1992)

- Family responsibilities (ACE 2008, 2009)

- Other inhibitors, such as difficulty transitioning to college from the military (DiRamio et al., 2008).

Referred as inhibitors in this study, these obstacles or any combination of them can hinder a student veteran from completing a degree using education benefits. Throughout the study, the operational definition of inhibitor is any material, psychological, structural,

or institutional factor that prevents or discourages the student veteran from completing the teacher education program and initial certification.

While there is research on inhibitors for veterans in college, none of the current authors explore the obstacles that student veterans in teacher education programs face. Therefore, the current study aims to explore whether the inhibitors in the research exist for the sample of veterans in a teacher education program as well as to determine if there are any other inhibitors that participants in a teacher education program identify in the process.

Enablers for Veterans in College

Variables that either help veterans to overcome inhibitors or that simply help student veterans continue to attend college toward a degree are referred to as enablers in this study. Research indicates a wide range of possible enablers for student veterans in college. These can include

- Personal Characteristics of the veteran (Murphy, 2011)

- Holistic approach to working with veteran students (DiRamio et al., 2008; Selber, Miller, & Chapman, 2011)

- Veteran's affairs office at the university (Bauman, 2009)

- Veteran-friendly campus (ACE, 2008; Hollis, 2009; Persky & Oliver, 2011)

- Learning community and orientation for student veterans (DiRamio et al., 2008; Gwin, Selber, Chavkin, & Williams, 2012; Murphy, 2011; Persky & Oliver, 2011)

- Faculty and staff training in veteran's needs (Persky & Oliver, 2011; Williams & Pankowski, 1992).

These enablers can serve to help veterans overcome any inhibitors as well as to help the veteran continue in the degree program to obtain a degree. Throughout the study the

6

operational definition of enabler is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that helps the student veteran overcome inhibitors and facilitates the completion of the teacher education program and initial certification.

Current research focuses on how student veterans are able to overcome obstacles while in college, but there is no focus on teacher education at all. This research aims to determine the enablers for student veterans to complete a teacher education program, as well as how teacher education programs can support such enablers and why some veterans experience more enablers than others. This study may verify findings already reported in the research literature, but also aims to explore any other enablers that exist for participants in a teacher education program.

Veterans as Teachers

With over two million veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan in the next few years and possibly attending American colleges and universities using the Post-9/11 GI Bill (ACE, 2008, 2009), the number of student veterans in higher education institutions will continue to grow. This fact has the potential to cause great difficulties or could be a source of wonderful opportunities, for the individual veterans, colleges and universities, and even our public schools.

The U.S. Department of Education (2011) and Feistritzer (2005) report that there is a perennial shortage of teachers in the areas of foreign language, bilingual education, mathematics, reading, science, and special education, which makes these fields high-needs. Veterans have served as an extensive pool of potential teachers (Parker, 1992), because of the number of veterans who are separating from the military every year. Research reveals that veterans who become teachers have effective classroom

management and teaching methods as well as the characteristics desired by administrators (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002). Veterans who become teachers have proven to be mobile, willing to teach in urban and rural areas, and a high percentage of teachers who complete the Troops to Teachers program taught math, science, vocational education, and special education (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002). All of this coalesces well into the fact that veterans serve as a potential group that has the education benefits to attend college, the skills to do well in a teacher education program, as well as the willingness to teach in high need areas effectively. Thus, determining the inhibitors to completing a teacher education program as well as what enablers exist to overcome the inhibitors is of great value.

Statement of the Problem

Every veteran who serves honorably and gets discharges under honorable conditions has education benefits available, such as the GI Bill and/or the Hazlewood Exemption (from Texas only), that can be used to attend college and complete a teacher education program. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (2011a) reports that nonveterans had a higher completion rate than veterans from 2000-2009, when comparing Bachelor's Degrees. There are inhibitors that act in such a way as to keep veterans from completing a teacher education program, and enablers that help overcome the obstacles. OIF/OEF-era veterans serve as a potential pool of teacher candidates and have the skills and characteristics sought in teachers. Therefore, research to explore and explain the enablers and inhibitors for veterans to attend college and complete a teacher education program is necessary to address this problem.

8

Used as a recruiting tool, both forms of the GI Bill as well as the Hazlewood Exemption (for Texas residents) offer lucrative educational benefits, which are advertised to encourage young individuals to make the decision to join the US military and foster parental support for that decision (Militaryspot.com, 2011; Military.com, n.d.). These benefits can be used for veterans to attend college and complete a teacher education program and initial certification, effectively addressing the national teacher shortage and putting effective teachers in the classroom.

Hawn (2011) notes that more research is needed to help bridge the gap between military and civilian higher education. Finding out which inhibitors affect veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification as well as the enablers that helped them overcome the obstacles contributes to the literature and can help colleges and universities support the enablers. This research can determine if the enablers and inhibitors already identified in the literature are confirmed for OIF/OEF-era enlisted, active duty veterans in a teacher education program, as well as discover any new ones to contribute to the literature.

Deficiencies in Current Research

While there is some research on the topic of veteran's education, there is a lack research on the topic of veterans in teacher education programs. The Troops to Teachers program has been studied, but that program is not for the average active-duty veteran. Instead, it caters to those who have served for 6-20 years ("Troops to Teachers", 2012) and a majority of the participants are former officers (Feistritzer, Hill, & Willett, 1998). Since it is possible that a majority of active-duty veterans would have the skills and aptitude to become effective teachers, this study contributes to the literature in several

9

ways. No studies have been conducted to determine the enablers and inhibitors for

veterans to complete a teacher education program using education benefits and initial

certification. The majority of research focused on inhibitors for veterans in college in

general, and there is little emphasis on how veterans were able to overcome these

inhibitors (enablers). The fact that veterans serve as a viable source for filling teacher

needs in America (McCree, 1993; Feistritzer, 2005), that they have been successful

teachers (Bank, 2007; Nunnery et al., 2009; Owings et al., 2005), and that they have

education benefits to help enable the completion of the program are all salient reasons for

studying this topic. In addition, this research has the potential to extend or reveal new

information that can inform future studies and help influence policy.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

Research on veterans is an important and timely topic because of the number of

those who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001. These veterans have

educational benefits available to them upon discharge or return from deployment and

serve as a potential pool of effective teachers, but many student veterans face inhibitors

that keep them from completing a teacher education program. There are also enablers

that help veterans overcome inhibitors or simply help them complete a teacher education

program, but these are not widely known. The purpose of this study was to explore the

enablers and inhibitors that enlisted, active-duty OIF/OEF-era veterans may confront

when using education benefits such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or

the Hazlewood Exemption, to complete a teacher education program and initial

certification in Texas. The research question for this study is: What are the enablers and

inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial

certification in Texas using education benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, after serving on active duty? Research sub-questions are as follows:

1. What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

2. What are the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

3. How can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

4. How can teacher education programs support the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

5. Why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not?

6. Why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others?

Significance of the Study

This study is timely and necessary today because about 2 million OIF/OEF veterans are or will be separating from the military (ACE, 2008, 2009) coupled with the teacher shortage we are currently experiencing, especially in high-needs schools and in math and science veterans are a great resource pool for effective and successful teachers of our nation's children (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Rockoff, 2004; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002). Education benefits can offset the cost of attending a teacher education program and obtain initial certification. If we can understand the inhibitors and enablers for OIF/OEF-era enlisted, active duty veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification using education benefits, we can put

teachers in classrooms that are motivated, effective, and with the characteristics that are desired in our schools. This study informs theory on higher education for veterans, contributes to the literature on veteran's education, and helps inform policy at both the institutional and the policy level.

The audience that benefits from this research includes veterans, schools, and students, as this research will be presented in written form as well as in person colleges and universities throughout the nation. The findings of this study will be used to make specific recommendations to these institutions to increase the utilization of this benefit for our veterans who so richly deserve it.

Definition of Key Terms

1. Enabler: The Free Dictionary (2012b) states that to enable means "a. To supply with the means, knowledge, or opportunity; make able. b. To make feasible or possible" (para. 1). The operational definition of enabler is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that helps the student veteran overcome inhibitors and facilitates the completion of the teacher education program and initial certification.

2. Inhibitor: According to The Free Dictionary (2012c), to inhibit means to "To hold back; restrain. To prohibit; forbid" (para. 1). The operational definition of inhibitor is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that prevents or discourages the student veteran from completing the teacher education program and initial certification.

3. OIF/OEF veteran: An OIF/OEF veteran is a person "who served on active duty in a theater of combat operations during a period of war after the Persian Gulf War,

or in combat against a hostile force during a period of hostilities after November 11, 1998" (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2011b).

4. Servicemember: The Free Dictionary (2012d) defines a serviceman as "A man who is a member of the armed forces….Also called (feminine) servicewoman a person serves in the armed services of a country" (para. 1). For the purposes of this study, servicemember will refer to a person of either gender who serves in the armed forces of the United States.

5. Separated/discharged: According to The Free Dictionary (2012a), discharge means "Dismissal or release from…service….especially from military service" (para. 5).

6. Teacher Preparation Program: A teacher preparation program, according to Texas Administrative Code §228.35 (2012), an

   educator preparation program shall provide each candidate with a minimum of 300 clock-hours of coursework and/or training that includes at least six clock-hours of explicit certification test preparation that is not embedded in other curriculum elements (p. 1). The teacher candidate:
       shall complete the following prior to any student teaching, clinical teaching, or internship:
       (A) a minimum of 30 clock-hours of field-based experience. Up to 15 clock-hours of this field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission, or other video or technology-based method; and
       (B) 80 clock-hours of coursework and/or training. (Texas Administrative Code §228.35, 2012, p. 1)

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The limitations of this study include the fact that the research will only be conducted in central Texas. But according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2007) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (2007), Texas is one of the top three states with the

highest number of veterans age 39 and under as well as veterans in general, after California and Florida. Therefore, Texas is a good place to begin a qualitative study.

As with any dissertation, a limitation of the research is the number of researchers applying their expertise to the problem. This limitation has been addressed through triangulation of data as well as utilizing the feedback and constructive criticism of the dissertation committee to ensure that the research and findings are valid and reliable.

Delimitations include the fact that there are gatekeeping issues with obtaining a list of possible study participants from university officials. The researcher visited the teacher education program directors in person with a synopsis of the research to be conducted to obtain this information. It is the hope of the author that this research, when completed, can be presented to governmental agencies and higher education institutions to help inform further research and help develop programs for veteran students.

Researcher's Perspective

The researcher is a veteran of the United States Marine Corps who served four years on active duty and was able to complete his Bachelor's Degree because of the funding available under the Montgomery GI Bill. The researcher used this education benefit to complete a teacher education program, encountering and overcoming several inhibitors along the way. There were enabling factors that helped the researcher complete the program as well, helping to overcome the inhibitors presented and see through to the completion of the teacher education program, initial certification, and being hired as a teacher upon graduation.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Recent research has focused on veteran's needs in college when returning from a deployment or enrolling after discharge (ACE, 2008, 2009; Cook & Kim, 2009; Hogan & Seifert, 2010; Murphy, 2011; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009, 2010; Steele et al., 2010). Rumann and Hamrick (2010) focus on how veterans readjust after leaving college for a deployment and returning to college. Selber et al. (2011) completed research on how to support veterans who are attending college and to make the transition as smooth as possible. Veterans serve as a viable pool of potential teachers to address the perennial teacher shortage in America (Bank, 2007). There is a gap in the research, however, on inhibitors and enablers for student veterans to complete a teacher education program. To date, no research exists for veterans in a teacher education program.

Structure of the Literature Review

The original Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 was the first legislation of its kind to pay for veterans to attend college; since that time, veterans have had a history of both doing well and completing college (Kiester, 1994). Veterans who become teachers possess qualities that contribute to their effectiveness in the classroom and research shows that they are successful teachers (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002). Recently, programs aimed at targeting veterans to become school teachers, such as the Troops to Teachers program, have been developed and successfully implemented to put veterans into classrooms, but these programs are

underfunded and for a small proportion of veterans (Feistritzer, 2005; Nunnery et al., 2009; Owings et al., 2006). With 2 million Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) veterans separating from the military in the next few years (ACE, 2008, 2009) and the teacher shortage we are currently experiencing (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Parker, 1992; Rockoff, 2004), especially in high-needs schools and in math and science, veterans are a great resource pool for effective and successful teachers of our nation's children.

The goal of this dissertation is to determine inhibitors are that prevent and enablers that help enlisted active-duty OIF/OEF-era veterans complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification. In order to accomplish this goal in an effective and appropriate manner, the literature review is organized into the following sections:

- Purpose statement and research questions

- Educational benefits for veterans

- Reasons for joining the military

- Veterans in college

- Inhibitors for veterans in college

- Enablers for veterans in college

- Teacher shortage issues

- Veterans as teachers

- How the literature relates to the study

- Deficiencies in the literature

- Summary

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

Research on veterans is an important and timely topic because of the number of those who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001. These veterans have educational benefits available to them upon discharge or return from deployment and serve as a potential pool of effective teachers, but many student veterans face inhibitors that keep them from completing a teacher education program. The operational definition of enabler will be any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that helps the student veteran overcome inhibitors and facilitates the completion of the teacher education program and initial certification.

There are also enablers that help veterans overcome inhibitors or simply help them complete a teacher education program, but these are not widely known. The operational definition of inhibitor will be any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that prevents or discourages the student veteran from completing the teacher education program and initial certification. The purpose of this study is to explore the enablers and inhibitors that enlisted, active-duty OIF/OEF-era veterans may confront when using education benefits such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas. The research question for this study is: What are the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas using education benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, after serving on active duty? Research sub-questions are as follows:

1. What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

2. What are the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

3. How can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

4. How can teacher education programs support the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

5. Why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not?

6. Why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others?

The next section provides a historical discussion of educational benefits for veterans and their use or lack of use, depending on the era.

Educational Benefits for Veterans

Since the original Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, a number of veterans have always chosen to attend college using education benefits provided to them because of military service (Kiester, 1994). Following the original and Korean-era GI Bill came the Vietnam-era GI Bill, the Veterans Education Assistance Program (VEAP), the Montgomery GI Bill (Spaulding, 2000), and finally the Post-9/11 GI Bill. In order to understand how to better serve veterans in institutions of higher education and to provide the specifically tailored, unique support and help the veterans need in order to be successful in a teacher education program today, we must first find out what inhibitors and enablers exist for veterans already attending college using such benefits.

Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944/Korean War GI Bill

Using historical research methods, Spaulding (2000) outlines the four major GI Bills and their historical impact on veterans in the United States. The original Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 was the first program of its kind in the United States to provide several types of benefits for veterans, including housing, training, education, and unemployment benefits (Spaulding, 2000). Education benefits were paid directly to the university and living expenses were provided for the veteran student. The result was that many universities developed alternative admission criteria for veterans. The original GI Bill was extended by President Truman in 1952 for veterans who served in the Korean War ("The GI BILL's History", n. d.). The Korean War GI Bill, however, paid directly to the veteran and living expenses were no longer paid. After the Korean-era GI Bill came the Vietnam-era GI Bill.

Vietnam-Era GI Bill

The Vietnam-era GI Bill did not keep up with costs of college, and as a result, was not as widely used as the original GI Bill (Spaulding, 2000). Spaulding suggests that this may be for three reasons: 1) Vietnam-era veterans were younger, 2) they did not receive adequate counseling upon demobilization, and 3) this GI Bill had a low monetary worth. The Veterans Education Assistance Program was an unsuccessful education program in effect for a short period of time before being replaced by the more lucrative Montgomery GI Bill.

Montgomery GI Bill

The Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) is a veteran's education program in effect from 1985 to today to provide a tuition allowance and monthly stipend for up to 36 months for separated servicemembers who served at least three years on active duty. The program requires a servicemember to pay in $100 per month for the first year of service in return for the allowance and stipend upon separation. When the veteran separates from active duty, he or she has 10 years from the date of separation to use the benefits to attend degree and certificate programs, flight training, apprenticeship/on-the-job training and/or correspondence courses (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2007). The monthly rate for a full-time student for the MGIB in 2009 was $1321 (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2008). The Post-9/11 GI Bill is the most recent version of the benefit.

Post-9/11 GI Bill

Enacted on June 30, 2008, the Post-9/11 GI Bill is an education benefit for all veterans serving at least 90 days of active duty service after September 10, 2001 and who receive an honorable discharge (Lay, 2009, p. 1). It can be used for vocational/technical training, undergraduate, or graduate degree work, and allows some servicemembers to transfer benefits to their dependents (U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2012). The Post-9/11 GI Bill is extensive and pays tuition and fees, a monthly housing allowance, an annual book and supplies stipend, and a one-time rural benefit for eligible persons (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2012).

When the veteran separates from active duty, he or she has 15 years from the date of separation to use the allowance and it can be used to provide up to 36 months of education benefits (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2012). "The Post-9/11 GI Bill

will pay your tuition based upon the highest in-state tuition charged by a public educational institution in the state where the school is located. The amount of support that an individual may qualify for depends on where they live and what type of degree they are pursuing" (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2012). For this study, the term "GI Bill" refers to either the MGIB or the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Texas offers a benefit called the Hazlewood Exemption for all veterans who join the military from Texas and are honorably discharged.

Hazlewood Exemption

Veterans who join from Texas and serve for 181 days of active service are eligible for a tuition exemption for up to 150 hours of instruction at public colleges and universities under the Hazlewood Exemption (College for all Texans, 2012; Moynahan, 2009). According to Moynahan (2009), the Hazlewood Exemption Act was modified in 2009 to allow veterans to use both federal GI Bill benefits concurrently with the Hazlewood Exemption, as well as to allow veterans to transfer unused hours to a child.

Veterans attending college in Texas today have a choice between the Montgomery GI Bill or Post-9/11 GI Bill, and those who joined from Texas have the added education benefit of the Hazlewood Exemption. Each of these programs acts as an enabler for veterans to attend college and complete a teacher education program. Indeed, educational benefits is one reason young people join the military (DiRamio et al., 2008; Thomas, 2009).

Reasons for joining the military

There are several reasons for joining the military besides educational benefits, and these reasons may have an impact on whether or not the veteran chooses to attend college and is successful in doing so. Possible reasons include a sense of pride or service to our country, family history of military service, and even education incentives. DiRamio et al. (2008) conducted qualitative interviews with 25 student veterans who were recently serving on active duty to determine the needs these student veterans bring to college. While the majority of respondents cited the 9/11 attacks as their main reason for joining the military, other reasons included economic reasons, family tradition, and education benefits.

Thomas (2009) reports that "college education is one of the strongest incentives recruiters use to induce enlistment" (p. 116) into the American military. With the advent of an all-volunteer military in 1973, educational benefits were offered as incentives to join the military (Rumann & Hamrick, 2009; Thomas, 2009). According to Haveman & Smeeding (2006), children from disadvantaged families have less motivation, preparation, and ability to enroll, be accepted, and actually pay for college than those from higher socioeconomic status. Kilburn and Klerman (1999) assert that it is for these and other reasons that many high school students from disadvantaged backgrounds choose the military as a route to pursue upon graduation. In addition, the military gives members a sense of purpose and belonging, job training, and benefits such as the GI Bill for education (ACE, 2009; Rumann, 2010; Rumann & Hamrick, 2010). Education benefits for veterans are important benefits because of the great value they provide, allowing veterans to attend college and find success there.

Veterans in College

Veterans have a history of attending college, from the end of World War II to today (LaBarre, 1985; Stanley, 2003). These student veterans have come from a wide variety of backgrounds to attend college, in large part because of veteran's education benefits such as the GI Bill. Veteran students are often mature, experienced, and are successful in college (Olson, 1973), but there are often barriers, or inhibitors, to completing college for veterans.

History

The original Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 enabled record numbers of veterans to attend college after their military service, and this is expected to continue in coming years (LaBarre, 1985). Stanley (2003) offers a history of the GI Bills offered to veterans, beginning with the original Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944. This GI Bill resulted in approximately 7.8 million veterans using education benefits, with a minority in higher education (Stanley, 2003). In addition to helping veterans get an education, the original GI Bill prevented millions of men from flooding the job market and resulted in 49% of college admissions being veterans in 1947 ("The GI BILL's History," n.d.). Spaulding (2000) declares that the original GI Bill allowed veterans to gain admission into college even though they did not meet traditional admittance standards at the time. The fact that veterans were admitted was a result of the GI Bill as an enabler.

Clifford (1989) reports that the original GI Bill five million potential teachers were diverted into colleges for a few years immediately following World War II, keeping then from flooding the job market. The GI Bill made entry into the teaching profession

23

easy for veterans, which, when coupled with veterans preference, allowed veterans to enter education in a variety of positions in addition to teaching (Clifford, 1989). Kiester (1994) reports that the original Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 resulted in 2.2 million veterans attending college, out of which 238,000 teachers were produced. The Korean War GI Bill, passed in 1954, enabled over 1 million veterans attend college (Stanley, 2003).

Olson (1973) asserts that when veterans started using the GI Bill for the first time, they surprised many with their experience, maturity, and success in college. In terms of grades, LaBarre (1985) reports that research shows that veterans perform at or above the level of their civilian counterparts in college settings, even though they often did not do as well in high school. Veterans tended to be career oriented and academically successful, and did not use student services often, even though they reported a lack of information regarding veteran's benefits (LaBarre, 1985). LaBarre explains that veterans earn up to 1.5 times more money than nonveterans at the same education level. Military experience often translates well into college success, LaBarre (1985) declares, as veterans may even receive college credit for military education and training. In addition to skills, veterans often have a sense of self-esteem that contributes to success and are aware of personal abilities and weaknesses, both of which can be great enablers (LaBarre, 1985).

Angrist and Chen (2011) conducted ordinary least squares (OLS) estimates using data from the 2000 Census and note a strong correlation between military service and college education. They continue that Vietnam-era veterans exhibit similar schooling effects to earlier versions of the GI Bill, to include the original GI Bill and the Korean-era GI Bill. Chapman (1983) used data from the National Longitudinal Study of the High

24

School Class of 1972 to determine the personal and academic characteristics of GI Bill recipients. He reports that veterans from this population were more likely to be older, white, single males and were employed while they were students. Although veterans left high school with lower grades and a lower percentile rank than nonveterans, veterans performed as well academically as nonveterans in college (Chapman, 1983). Spaulding (2000) states that 5.1 million veterans were enabled to attend college using the Vietnam-era GI Bill with another 3 million attending training courses using the benefit. He continues, however, that the veterans struggled mightily because of rising costs in living expenses and college costs, which can be an inhibitor to completing college. The Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB), according to Spaulding (2000), covers only about forty percent of the cost of a college or university education, resulting in lower usage among veterans. In this case, the MGIB can act as both an enabler and inhibitor for the veteran, enabling some to attend college with monetary aid but inhibiting others from attending because it does not cover enough of the cost of attendance.

Contemporary Issues

ACE (2008, 2009) reports that more than 2 million veterans are coming home from the Afghanistan and Iraq wars and may be enrolling in America's colleges and universities as a result of the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The number of veterans attending colleges and universities across the nation is likely to continue to increase because the Post-9/11 GI Bill will enable attendance (Rumann & Hamrick, 2009). Rumann and Hamrick (2010) interviewed six veterans several times to understand individual experience of veterans who had completed some college before being deployed. The study was conducted at a large, public research-intensive university in the Midwest.

Maturity levels were reported as different by student veterans, as veterans described being more goal-oriented, which is a possible inhibitor (Rumann & Hamrick, 2010). Student veterans did report some positive aspects, such as more confidence in their abilities and decision-making skills, both of which are enablers (Rumann & Hamrick, 2010).

Murphy (2011) conducted thirteen qualitative interviews to determine the needs of Post-9/11 GI Bill-era veterans in college. He finds that veterans see themselves as focused and more mature than traditional students in college, with a worldview that is influenced by their military experience. These veterans report that they want their prior training and experience to count for college credit, but this is often not the case, resulting in what Murphy describes as paying twice for an education. Murphy continues, noting that the veterans are missing a sense of community upon entering college, going to campus for classes and then having little on-campus involvement outside of class. All of these issues can be inhibitors that may make a veteran unlikely to complete college. Related to campus involvement is the desire for a student veteran's organization to address this lack of community as well as to help with administrative processes in college that can be cumbersome and confusing for veterans. Participants desire representatives to help them on campus that are familiar with and understand the veteran population and their unique needs and issues. Each of these can act as enablers for veterans in college.

Murphy (2011) describes student veteran participants as having time management skills and discipline, as a result of military experience, that enables them to be successful in college. The flip side of this, however, is a sense of being different and a sense of alienation because they are different from traditional students. This results in many of

the participants seeking to remain anonymous on campus, which can inhibit some from continuing on. Regarding university resources to meet veteran's needs, participants note that campus veteran's representatives, those responsible for the GI Bill administration, are integral and often go above and beyond to help veterans. In addition, the fact that the university works with veterans when payments for tuition are delayed also enables veterans to continue to attend. Finally, according to Murphy, personal resourcefulness was noted by participants as a strong reason many were able to meet the challenges college attendance has presented. These enablers can combine to help a veteran complete a college program, especially personal resourcefulness and people on campus willing to help veterans.

When describing the population of veterans in colleges and universities, ACE (2009) points out the in 2007-08, 85% of student veterans (undergraduates) were 24 years old or older, more likely to be nonwhite than white, and that women student veterans made up 27% of all military undergraduates. This is astounding because females comprised only 7% of all U.S. veterans in 2006 (Rumann & Hamrick, 2010).

Veteran students are unique because they often come to college with credit earned while on active duty and they have educational benefits to help offset the cost of college, both of which are enabling factors. Brown and Gross (2011) define a military student as a "student who is either a member of the active duty, reserve, National Guard, or retired military population" (p. 46). Military friendly institutions as those that "embrace practices that recognize the unique needs and characteristics of these students," thus enabling them complete a degree program, according to Brown and Gross (2011, p. 46). The criteria for being designated a military friendly institution include the following:

- Offering priority registration for military students
- Simplified or expedited application process
- Flexible enrollment deadlines
- Academic and counseling services targeted to military students
- Special Web pages for returning military students
- Support groups
- Transfer credit policies that minimize loss of credit and avoid duplication of coursework
- Limited academic residency requirement of 25% of undergraduate degree programs on campus and 30% for fully online programs
- Acceptance of ACE credit recommendations for learning experiences in the armed forces
- Awarding of credit for college level learning validated through testing (College Level Examination Program [CLEP], Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Services [DANTES] exams, and Excelsior College Testing (ECE)Deferred tuition payment plans
- Veterans lounges and centers
- Research focus on meeting the needs of military students (Brown & Gross, p. 46)

Student veterans comprised 4% of all undergraduates in colleges in 2007-08 (ACE, 2009). Regarding where student veterans attended in 2007-08, 43% attended public 2-year institutions, 21% attended public four year colleges, and about 12.5% attended private institutions (ACE, 2009). Three-quarters of veterans noted that location was a key factor in choosing where to attend college, followed by cost (about 50%). Twenty-three percent of student veterans attended full time, 37% attended part time, and those who received benefits such as the GI Bill were 15% more likely to enroll full time (ACE, 2009). This indicates the enabling effect of the GI Bill to help a veteran attend college.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (2011a) indicated that during the decade of 2000 to 2009, a higher percentage of veterans completed some college than nonveterans every year (3-5% more depending on year). Even though veterans were getting some college, however, they were not completing a college degree, which indicated that inhibitors likely play a role in this. When comparing Bachelor's degrees,

28

however, nonveterans had a higher completion rate than veterans for every year, although the difference was never more than two percentage points. Veterans obtained advanced degrees at higher rates than nonveterans across the board (2-3% more depending on year) (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2011a).

Regarding educational attainment of veterans, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (2011c) reported that 35.4% of male veterans and 47.5% of female veterans had some college. This indicated that veterans, while attending college for a period of time, are not completing because of inhibitors of some kind. Female veterans were more likely to have a Bachelor's degree (18.3%) than male veterans (15%); the same applies for an advanced degree, with 11.6% of women veterans having one while 9.9% of men have one (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2011c). This indicates that females may have either fewer inhibitors or more enablers to complete college. A more detailed account of the inhibitors for veterans in college is provided in the next section.

Inhibitors for Veterans in College

Research on veterans in higher education has a wide range and reveals that there are a number of possible inhibitors for veterans to complete a college degree. A student veteran may face any combination of inhibitors when attending college. To date, there has not been a study that explores both enablers and inhibitors for veterans to attend college or to complete a teacher education program. However, there are several studies that explore inhibitors.

Since the 9/11 attacks, more than 1.6 million veterans have served in combat (ACE, 2009), which results in a variety of barriers to attending college. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (2010), as of November 2010, there were 1,701,675

29

veterans residing in the state of Texas. Of this number, 40,402 veterans were using GI

Bill education benefits (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2011b). Selber et al.

(2011) offer a description of Texas veterans participating in their study: 1) 71% had

multiple deployments, 2) 94% had been in combat zones in Iraq and 17% in combat

zones in Afghanistan, 3) 41% were wounded or injured during military service, 4) 44%

reported still having trouble with their injuries, and 5) 38% had a health problem related

to deployment other than a wound or injury (slide 5). Hawn (2011) asserts that we are

likely to see more veterans with combat experience and/or multiple deployments in our

higher education system today because of troop drawdowns that are occurring with the

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Bauman (2009) conducted interviews with twenty-four veterans who were

attending college when they were called to active duty to be deployed to a war zone such

as Iraq or Afghanistan. He sought to describe the three phases and challenges that

accompany each for these individuals: 1) preparing to leave college, 2) deployment, and

3) re-entering college. Student veterans face distinct challenges at each phase, and these

may or may not overlap with each other at times.

With U.S. involvement in the war on terror for most of the first decade of the 21st

century, military personnel, active duty, reserve, and members of the National Guard

members sometimes faced numerous deployments (Rumann & Hamrick, 2010). These

deployments may interrupt college attendance, postpone it, or inhibit a veteran from

completing a teacher education program. Selber et al. (2011) provided a useful

framework for understanding inhibitors for veterans in college. They outlined several

issues that veterans attending college face, which included 1) mental health/health/injury,

2) financial issues, 3) information/bureaucratic issues, 4) family responsibilities, and 5) other issues. This served as the framework for inhibitors for this study.

Mental Health/Health/Injury

Mental health, health, and injury are grouped together because they are each issues related to health that veterans contend with, whether attending college or not. Bauman (2009) notes that many veterans returning to college from deployment have had traumatic experiences that may lead to nightmares or memories triggered by smells, but that counseling is not always readily available to help these individuals. Combat stress and/or PTSD can result in strained relationships upon returning from a deployment, resulting in a loss of purpose as well as having "short fuses and being quick to anger" (Bauman, 2009, p. 142-143). Loud noises and crowded areas can also cause problems for veterans, which can make the transition to college extremely difficult, according to Bauman.

The transition to college may be made more difficult for veterans, as many veterans may be recovering from post-war trauma and have issues such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (ACE, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008; Hollis, 2009). DiRamio et al. (2008) note that disabilities such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, cause problems for veterans attending college, because more combat troops survive injuries today than ever before. Rumann and Hamrick (2010) found that a majority of respondents reported higher stress levels as a result of combat, such as uncomfortability in crowds and short tempers.

Health problems or persistent injuries are also inhibitors for veterans in college because these things make consistent attendance difficult or impossible and can

31

contribute to financial issues as well (Selber et al., 2011). Financial issues are another inhibitor that student veterans face, regardless of whether or not they are receiving education benefits.

Financial Issues

The pressure to get a job and make money upon being discharged from the military service is immediately felt for all veterans, including student veterans. Veterans often return home with a clear purpose and are welcomed home, sometimes as heroes, but within weeks can be experiencing unemployment and no sense of purpose (Bauman, 2009). In addition, depending on when the veteran returns from deployment or is discharged, enrolling in college may have to wait until the next semester or even the next year because it has already started (Bauman, 2009). This delays benefits and may force the veteran to obtain gainful employment and forego college, even though the education benefits are available when the semester begins again. Financial issues result in some respondents to consider re-enlisting to keep their benefits (DiRamio et al., 2008).

Veterans who have the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit will have the financial burden of college lessened, but they will continue to deal with other barriers to attendance (Cook & Kim, 2009; Steele et al., 2010). ACE (2009) notes veterans often have difficulty financing college. Gwin et al. (2012) report that veterans are very focused on career development, although 1 in 5 veterans reported considering dropping out of college as a result of the difficulties encountered. Hollis (2009) explains that many veterans leave the military with little to no money and families to support, so they often seek a quick career transition.

Gwin et al. (2012) developed a questionnaire that was completed by 337 veterans at a medium-sized university in Texas to determine how to best support veterans. Nearly half (48%) of veterans report having to work 20 or more hours per week, while 31% report working 30 or more hours per week (Gwin et al., 2012), which can place a great deal of stress on a person trying to attend college full time. Financial issues can also be caused by information or bureaucratic issues, both of which are categorized together as another inhibitor.

Information/Bureaucratic Issues

Bureaucratic obstacles seem to abound for veterans, both within postsecondary institutions as well as with the Department of Veterans Affairs, adding to the difficulty of attending college. Obtaining college credit for military experience and training is a source of frustration for veterans, as they feel that their military experiences and leadership skills contribute to their abilities (ACE, 2008; Murphy, 2011; Persky & Oliver, 2011; Steele et al., 2010; Williams & Pankowski, 1992). DiRamio et al. (2008) declared that obtaining college credits for experience and training is confusing. In addition, ACE (2009) reported that veterans often feel that information on benefits is not clearly explained to them and many colleges do not have the information at all. Difficulties such as lack of outreach, information, and "veteran-friendly practices" (ACE, 2008, p. 1) may cause veterans not even to enroll in college. Overcoming bureaucratic obstacles is too much for some veterans, reports ACE (2009). Other inhibitors include a lack of awareness of educational benefits, assumptions that the process would be too difficult, and confusing information on web-sites, as veterans prefer personal interaction to web sites (ACE, 2008). Hollis (2009) points out that moving from a very structured life in the

military to a nearly totally unstructured college environment as well as a lack of a chain of command to get answers to questions can increase difficulties for veterans.

Rumann and Hamrick (2009) explained that services that colleges and universities provided for student servicemembers vary by institution, resulting in great inconsistencies. "At present, there are no consistent policies and procedures for colleges and universities to follow" to provide services for student veterans (Rumann & Hamrick, 2009, p. 29). They continued, stating that if there are few veteran faculty or staff members with knowledge of military culture or the effects of wartime service, the transition for veteran students may be made more difficult.

Cook and Kim (2009) surveyed 723 college presidents from a cross-section of colleges and universities in the U.S. to ascertain what methods these institutions are taking to help ease the transition from military to college life for student veterans. They also conducted focus groups with military students to hear their side. Of the institutions that responded to the survey, 57% currently provide services designed for veterans, while over half of the colleges were recruiting veterans to their institution (Cook & Kim, 2009). According to Cook and Kim (2009), most of the universities surveyed were considering changes to their campuses to make them more veteran-friendly, the top two of which were considering training for faculty and staff and seeking funding sources for campus programs. Three-fourths of respondents noted that the two most pressing issues that institutions faced included financial aid and student retention, reported Cook and Kim (2009), followed by health care issues.

Focus group interviewees, according to Cook and Kim (2009), reported that the campus programs that institutions have to help veterans did not always match up with

veteran needs or desires. Servicemembers, while currently enlisted, reported that they intended to attend college after discharge, but barriers may discourage them from doing so. Focus group participants wanted universities to listen and understand the unique circumstances and issues student veterans bring with them to college. Participants discussed veteran-friendly colleges they have heard about through word of mouth. These colleges, participants contended, offer system-wide support for student veterans, such as making enrollment and transfer of credits as easy as possible. The focus groups insisted that the colleges that reached out to veterans and advertised their veteran-friendly practices were most likely to attract student veterans and enable them to be successful. Family responsibilities are another inhibitor for married veterans or veterans with children.

Family Responsibilities

The military pay structure encourages servicemembers to get married, as all branches of the military services offer extra pay for housing and food, as well as health benefits for family members (Hogan & Seifert, 2010). Providing for a spouse or a family provides additional pressure to find a job and forego the college education, even with educational benefits. Being married means that the spouse must support the veteran mentally and often financially in his or her quest for a college education. If the relationship is not already strained, separating from the military and moving will cause strain, and it is possible that going through the process of getting enrolled and attending college is not a possibility for the veteran.

Using the 2005 American Community Survey, Hogan and Seifert (2010) analyzed the data to test the hypothesis that the benefits system in the U.S. military contributed to

higher marriage rates. The authors reported that those who have served on active duty for two or more years are nearly three times more likely to be married than comparable civilians. Indeed, "More than half of active-duty military members are married" (Hogan & Seifert, 2010, p. 435). In addition, Hogan and Seifert reported that military members had higher rates of divorce than comparable civilians. According to Yonkman and Bridgeland (2009), partly as a result of long (and sometimes numerous) deployments, 1 in 5 servicemembers have filed for divorce since 2001.

Lundquist (2007), using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), with 1,280 respondents, analyzed divorce rates for civilians versus enlisted members of the armed forces from 1978 to 1985 using bivariate and multivariate analysis. Lundquist (2007) reported that military enlistees are more likely to marry at younger ages and "when compared to same aged, married civilians in the presence of multiple demographic, religious, socioeconomic, and attitudinal controls, enlistees are still more likely to divorce than comparable civilians" (Lundquist, 2007, p. 213). Divorced veterans are least likely to graduate from college, according to Taniguchi and Kaufman (2005).

As of 2007-08, 48% of military undergraduates were married and 47% were raising children, so balancing family responsibilities with college attendance proves difficult for many student veterans (ACE, 2009). Gwin et al. (2012) reported that 41% of veteran participants attending the university had two or more children, which contributes to family challenges while attending college. ACE (2008) reported that family responsibilities could inhibit veterans from completing college, plus there was the lure of finding a job right away because the veteran did not see the need for higher education

upon discharge. Taniguchi and Kaufman (2005) found that having children discouraged men and women student veterans from attending college, a certain inhibitor. There are numerous other inhibitors that do not fall into any one particular category.

Other Inhibitors

There are some other inhibitors mentioned in the literature that certainly affect the propensity for a student veteran to complete college, but that are not sufficiently developed to warrant a section of their own. These other inhibitors include 1) lack of background knowledge and cultural differences between military and college, 2) difficulty in establish relationships and telling others of veteran status, and 3) a difficult transition from military to college life because of a host of problems.

Being first-generation students or students from lower socioeconomic status as well as delayed college entrance are inhibitors for veterans to complete college (ACE, 2008). Hollis (2009) declares, from his own experience of six years in the Army, that there is a cultural barrier between military and higher education that is exacerbated by low socioeconomic status (SES) students not being ready for college. Murphy (2011) interviewed thirteen veterans using the Post-9/11 GI Bill, the majority of which had college experience prior to enlisting in the military, which may make the transition back to college less difficult.

Rumann and Hamrick (2010) report that student veterans are wary as to whom to tell of their veteran status and of their experiences and reported difficulty in making friends and establishing relationships. In addition to this tension, student veterans had to learn how to negotiate their new identity and old one, sharing that they feel they must be careful whom they reveal their veteran status to and what that meant to others (Rumann

37

& Hamrick, 2010). The fact that many college students were younger than student veterans exacerbated this problem.

Transitioning from the military to college is often difficult for veterans, and all of the inhibitors listed above affect the transition as well as the veteran's propensity to complete college. Steele et al. (2010) insisted that the transition to college is difficult for many veterans, as they reported having difficulty balancing responsibilities, meeting academic requirements, and dealing with service-connected disabilities. Time management was another issue that veterans were forced to contend with upon entering college because of the lack of structure (ACE, 2009). Each of the inhibitors that may result in student veterans not feeling as if they are able to complete college.

When transitioning to college, DiRamio et al. (2008) noted that student veterans exhibited a higher level of maturity than nonveteran students due to their experiences, which resulted in impatience and frustration with others. With regard to the transition to college, Gwin et al. (2012) listed several items that came to light with their questionnaire: 1) issues with admissions and course credit transfer, 2) "stress related to balancing financial, familial, and educational responsibilities" (Gwin et al., 2012, p. 15) issues with being in crowded classrooms, 4) access to and understanding veteran's benefits, and 5) problems with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). (Gwin et al., 2012). In addition, veterans reported anger with what they perceived as disrespect from non-veteran students.

There were a wide variety of inhibitors for veterans attending college outlined in the literature, any combination of which can result in the student veteran leaving college before completing a college degree. These inhibitors included 1) mental

health/health/injury, 2) financial issues, 3) information/bureaucratic issues, 4) family responsibilities, and 5) other issues. This will serve as the framework for inhibitors for this study. These inhibitors were further explored in this study in order to understand their presence or absence. Understanding all of the possible inhibitors is crucial for colleges and universities to be able to help remove them and help student veterans to be successful in a teacher education program. There were also enablers that help student veterans continue on in college and be successful, regardless of the presence of inhibitors.

<div align="center">

Enablers for Veterans in College

</div>

There is no specific framework provided by researchers for enablers for veterans to attend and complete college, but a review of the literature revealed a list of enablers that make college attendance easier for student veterans. Enablers included 1) personal characteristics of the veteran, 2) a holistic approach by the university, 3) a veteran-friendly campus, 4) a learning community and orientation for student veterans, and 5) faculty and staff training in veterans' needs.

Personal Characteristics of the Veteran

Perhaps the best enabler to help veterans remain in and succeed in college is the veteran him- or herself. Murphy (2011) reported that student veterans using the Post-9/11 GI Bill declared that their own resourcefulness and tenacity is a strong tool to enable them to overcome obstacles in college. When describing the participants for his study, Murphy (2011) noted that many of the veteran participants using the Post-9/11 GI Bill in their study had prior college experience to enlisting in the military. All of the participants declared that their military experience aided in their discipline, time management, and

work ethic, enabling them to be more successful in college. While veterans reported that

education benefits make paying for college easier, there were numerous obstacles

presented that had to be overcome by the individual. For example, Murphy (2011)

asserted that respondents felt reliant upon their own resources when seeking help with

administrative problems and that there were not safeguards present to help veterans who

did not know they needed help. Most of the respondents persisted despite this fact,

because of personal characteristics to either seek the help or to assert the need for

programs and services for veterans. In addition to personal characteristics, the approach

the university takes towards student veterans is extremely important.

A Holistic Approach by the University

As a result of the issues that student veterans bring to college, DiRamio et al.

(2008) declared that a holistic approach to helping veterans was necessary at the college

level. This means that there is follow-up with veterans after admission to ascertain his or

her needs, as well as coordinating efforts between all of the offices that can provide

assistance across campus.

Selber et al. (2011) offered a holistic framework for working with student

veterans, which included attention to prior military experience, physical and mental

health, the university environment, career factors, and family needs. As a result of these

factors, the individuals that comprise the Irondale State University (pseudonym)

Advisory Council have developed a program for veterans at Irondale State University.

The holistic framework included a focus on remaining veteran-centered, offering peer-to-

peer support, active outreach, counseling services, case management (linked and referral),

faculty and staff training and assistance, and an "array of health, behavioral health, [and]

adaptive sports activities" (Selber et al., 2011, slide 3). A part of the holistic approach that can be a great enabler for student veterans is the veteran's affairs office at the university.

Veteran's Affairs Office at the University

Murphy (2011) asserted that a key individual was the veteran's representative that helped administer the GI Bill at the university, which could make meeting veteran needs much easier and enable them to remain in college. According to Bauman (2009), however, the Veteran's Affairs Office at the universities where participants for his study attended was "of little use" (p. 150). These contradictory findings were likely indicative of the range of experiences of veterans across universities in the United States and contribute to the need for more research on the differences and disparities between services offered by different campuses. The quality of help offered and provided by offices is no doubt a direct reflection of the individuals working in each office, resulting in inconsistent and dissimilar experiences across universities and colleges. A veteran-friendly campus is another possible enabler for veterans.

Veteran-Friendly Campus

ACE (2008) noted that colleges were most likely to lose student veterans in the first semester; therefore, they recommended making the college climate more welcoming to veterans. This could be done by making the campus veteran-friendly, which included peer organizations for veterans, one-stop services, and other ways to make veterans feel welcome. Campuses that were known as 'veteran friendly' were those that remove barriers for military and former military students and help them transition to college life

41

(Hollis, 2009; Persky & Oliver, 2011). There were several ways that universities could become veteran-friendly: 1) listen to veterans, 2) provide a place for veterans to congregate, 3) start a veterans group, 4) provide a veteran student orientation, 5) educate faculty, staff, and students, 6) partner with other organizations, and 7) provide an educated point of contact for veterans (ACE, 2009). With these actions, ACE (2009) declared, universities can serve veterans better and provide a welcoming place for veterans. One way to do this is to offer a specific learning community and orientation for student veterans.

Learning Community and Orientation for Student Veterans

Veterans indicated that they would like a learning community and orientation for veterans, in order to attend to specific issues and needs veterans have, as well as setting up academic transition programs for specific veteran's cohorts (Persky & Oliver, 2011). DiRamio et al. (2008) and Gwin et al. (2012) recommended a veteran-specific orientation to help identify veterans who need assistance and that transition "coaches" (DiRamio et al., 2008, p. 94) be made available to meet the needs of each individual veteran and enable them to be successful. These coaches could teach transitional skills, such as study skills, financial aid counseling, health care, and counseling (Gwin et al., 2012). In addition, Gwin et al. (2012) reported, respondents desired a veteran resource center, where veterans could meet and study in a comfortable environment. Finally, a student veteran organization was suggested by researchers for veterans to have a sense of camaraderie (DiRamio et al., 2008; Gwin et al., 2012; Murphy, 2011). All of the challenges associated with transitioning to college were easier to deal with when veterans provided support to each other, enabling veterans to continue attending (Steele et al.,

2010). Faculty and staff must also be trained in order to help attend to the student

veterans' needs and enable their continuation in college.

Faculty and Staff Training in Veterans' Needs

Faculty, staff, and administrators were identified as needing training to deal with

sensitive veteran's issues, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Persky &

Oliver, 2011; Williams & Pankowski, 1992). Veterans would like to feel validated,

according to Persky and Oliver (2011), by being listened to by faculty, staff, and

administrators in order to become aware of veterans' needs. Persky and Oliver (2011)

recommend using outside resources, such as local mental health centers to help veterans

as well as developing programs within the community college (i.e. Sociology,

Psychology) to attend to veteran's issues.

Just as with inhibitors, there is no specific number of enablers that will guarantee

success and completion of college for all student veterans. The possible enablers for

student veterans to complete college included 1) personal characteristics of the veteran,

2) a holistic approach by the university, 3) a veteran-friendly campus, 4) a learning

community and orientation for student veterans, and 5) faculty and staff training in

veterans' needs. Any combination of these enablers can result in the successful

completion of a degree program. The aim of this research, however, is to determine the

inhibitors and enablers for a veteran to complete a teacher education program, as veterans

have the ability to serve in the classroom and help address teacher shortage issues.

Teacher Shortage Issues

There seems to be a perennial teacher shortage in the United States, as there are specific subject areas of high need as well as a steady flow of retiring baby boomers (Bank, 2007). With over 2 million veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan in coming years and rejoining the workforce, the teaching profession is a prime career for these veterans to pursue, especially given the reality of teacher shortage issues. The U.S. Department of Education (2011) reported that foreign language, bilingual education, mathematics, reading specialist, science, and special education remain high-need fields in American education. Feistritzer (2005) observed that with seven percent of the teachers leaving the profession every year, there is an ever-growing need for qualified teachers.

> In addition, the nation needs specific kinds of teachers. We need more male teachers, more qualified teachers in our inner cities, and we especially need teachers of special education, mathematics and the sciences. We need more persons of color teaching and more teachers who can competently teach the subjects in the grades they are teaching. The nation needs teachers who want to teach, who put a premium on education and who want to help young people learn and meet high standards. We need committed teachers who plan to stay a while (Feistritzer, 2005, p. 3).

Rockoff (2004) declared that the effort to improve teacher quality is difficult because of the shortage of teachers the U.S. is facing currently, calling for more research on how to identify, recruit, and retain high quality teachers. Bank (2007) maintained that there are 77 million baby boomers nearing retirement age, which contributes to a need for teachers nationwide of up to 200,000 new teachers each year.

Ingersoll (2003), using data from the nationally representative Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and the supplemental Teacher Followup Survey (TFP), reported that contrary to what is believed about teachers, the data did not show that there was a shortage of teachers being produced. He continued that a large number of people trained

to become teachers did not ever teach and that the demand for teachers has risen. The question, Ingersoll (2003) maintained, is not whether there were enough teachers trained but whether there were imbalances or staffing problems in schools. Problems with staffing stem from teacher turnover, with mathematics, science, and special education having the highest turnover rates (16.4%, 15.6%, and 14.5%, respectively) (Ingersoll, 2003).

Parker (1992) declared that military retirees constitute a pool of potential teachers to help fill the shortage of quality teachers that is growing in the U.S. Recognizing that there is a projected shortage of teachers for years to come, Watt (1987) asserted that military veterans provided a viable pool of potential teachers to fill the gaps effectively. Watt (1987) noted that military personnel engage in training on a regular basis and education is stressed to them. Therefore, opportunities were offered to active duty personnel on military bases, from professional training to college courses (Watt, 1987). "Among the personnel leaving military service as career changers there may be a considerable number of individuals who find great satisfaction and challenge in teaching, and who would be a credit to the profession of teaching" (Watt, 1987, p. 7). McCree (1993) pointed out that there was a shortage of male and minority teachers in urban schools, especially in the areas of math and sciences. It is for this reason that exploring the enablers and inhibitors to attend college and complete a teacher education program is of vital importance today. Gaining a better understanding of the enablers and inhibitors at two different colleges contributes to the literature and can inform teacher education programs to help remove the inhibitors while enhancing the enablers, so veterans can join

the teaching profession, as they have a history of being effective teachers in the classroom.

Veterans as Teachers

Yonkman and Bridgeland (2009) noted that "veterans are untapped national assets, having acquired experiences and skills while serving in the military that have significant value in the workplace and in communities" (p. 8). Veterans reported being self-motivated, which contributed to their greater self-direction than the general public. In addition, 89% of OIF/OEF-era veterans were enlisted, which is a strong reason for seeking this population to become teachers and reduce the teacher shortage (Yonkman & Bridgeland, 2009). If there are too many inhibitors or too few enablers, however, this may not come to fruition and society will be losing out on a valuable resource.

Research on military veterans becoming teachers indicated that veterans exhibit the characteristics sought in effective teachers (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002). There is a shortage of literature on enlisted veterans becoming teachers, although there is research on military-to-teacher programs such as Troops to Teachers (TTT). The federal Troops to Teachers program assists retired military officers and enlisted personnel to obtain teacher certification after at least six years of active duty service ("Troops to Teachers", 2012). Eligibility criteria mandates that the veteran has served at least six years on active duty or have been medically discharged ("Troops to Teachers," 2012). The program offered an annual stipend of either $5,000 or $10,000 if the teacher commits to teach in a high-need district or a high-need district with a high proportion of disadvantaged students. In order to be eligible for the financial assistance, however, the veteran must be retired or medically

separated from active duty ("Troops to Teachers," 2012). This provides a strong rationale for exploring the enablers and inhibitors for all veterans to attend college and complete a teacher education program.

Willett (2002) reported that, despite some early misconceptions, TTT teachers were high quality teachers and they were well received in the field. Misconceptions included the visualization of the harsh drill sergeant, but Willett (2002) noted that today's military is very technical and requires a great deal of professional development that contributes to the ability to shift this expertise to the classroom. Therefore, veterans were able to transition from a wide variety of military jobs to college and ultimately, to be successful in the classroom.

The TTT program has been found to be successful, turning out high-quality teachers from former servicemembers. In addition, according to Bank (2007), "Troops to Teachers turns out educators who nearly perfectly match school districts' needs," with several attributes that makes them viable and desirable teacher candidates (p. 67). TTT participants had a much higher percentage of male and minority teachers, and over 24% of them teach in inner-city schools (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer et al., 1998; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Parker, 1992; Willett, 2002). In addition, former military tended to be more mobile than other public school teachers and a higher percentage was willing to teach in rural areas (Feistritzer et al., 1998; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Parker, 1992). Over half taught in large cities and 31% taught in medium-sized cities, where the need is greatest (Feistritzer, 2005). When compared to teachers nationwide, a higher percentage of TTT teachers taught math, science, vocational education, and special education (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Shaul, 2001; Willett,

2002). It is these attributes that make veteran teachers such practical and important candidates to address teacher shortages.

Nunnery et al. (2009) sought to determine if and to what degree TTT teachers increased student achievement based on student scores as well as comparing TTT teachers to other teachers of similar experience and subject area. Mathematics results revealed that TTT teachers have statistically significant slightly higher scores overall, and a positive and statistically significant difference between TTT and other teachers (Nunnery et al., 2009). TTT teachers were likely to use "effective instructional strategies . . . [such as] emphasizing the importance of effort to their students, asking questions to help students recall content and link with previous learning, recognize students who make progress, and assigning tasks that focus on important skills and concepts" (Owings et al., 2006, p. 123).

Nearly all TTT participants (between 98-100%) were extremely confident in their ability to teach their subject matter, motivate students, manage classrooms, and organize instruction (Feistritzer, 2005). "Troops teachers themselves make a strong case for the value of military experiences for transitioning into a teaching career" (Feistritzer, 2005, p. 20). These experiences included life experience, discipline, leadership, professionalism, and problem solving (Feistritzer, 2005). TTT teachers reported that their military experience helped prepare them to be organized, disciplined, to manage time well, work with diverse populations, and helped develop their leadership skills (Owings et al., 2005). These same attributes can also be enablers to complete a teacher education program.

TTT participants had several reasons for becoming teachers, and among the top was the "Desire to work with young people . . . Value or significance of education in society . . . [and] Interest in the subject-matter field" (Feistritzer, 2005, p. 26). TTT teachers have had a retention rate of 95% and over half of them intended to remain in teaching as long as they were able (Owings et al, 2006). TTT participants, Willett (2002) proclaimed, indicated that they wanted to work with young people and that they saw the value of education in society. "Our troops are accustomed to serving their country and protecting the next generation, and their mission in the classroom is really no different" (Willett, 2002, p. 159). These are admirable reasons to become a teacher, making it more important to explore the inhibitors and enablers and support veterans in becoming teachers.

Administrators have been happy with TTT teachers as well. According to Bank (2007), principals in Virginia "considered former service members more effective in classroom instruction and management than other teachers with similar years of teaching experience" (p. 68). Owings et al. (2005) found that over 90% of principals saw TTT teachers as more effective in classroom management and instruction. Principals (89.5%) also noted that TTT teachers had more of a positive impact on student achievement (Owings et al., 2005). Supervisors, according to Owings et al. (2006), indicated that TTT teachers were effective and better prepared than comparable, traditionally prepared teachers in student discipline and classroom management. Finally, 90% of supervisors report that they would seek out TTT teachers in the future for their school (Owings et al., 2006). Parker (1992) reports that employers were satisfied with military retiree teachers,

noting that they exhibited competency in setting long-term goals, maintaining records, and interacting well with colleagues.

Stidd (2012) made a strong case to encourage veterans to transition into a teaching career, noting that veterans have leadership skills that transfer to teaching well. McCree (1993) emphasized that former military personnel were a viable source of teacher candidates to help fill the teacher shortage. Today's military requires more education, intellectual skills, and sophistication (McCree, 1993). Veteran students, in general, had more self-confidence, maturity, and work experience than traditional college students. Another positive aspect was that veteran behavior was monitored and documented throughout his or her time in the military, which proved useful in selecting suitable teacher candidates, according to McCree (1993). The majority of TTT participants (59%) were commissioned officers while 38% were non-commissioned officers (Feistritzer et al., 1998).

Watt (1987) administered a survey to measure attitudes of 171 personnel leaving the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Army and veterans already in college toward teaching as a profession. Watt (1987) found that the positive attitude military personnel leaving the military had was sufficient for teacher education programs to target this group, veterans were a culturally diverse group from which to recruit potential teachers, and veteran education benefits add to this incentive.

As this research points out, there are several compelling reasons to learn what the enablers and inhibitors for using education benefits to complete a teacher education program and obtaining initial teacher certification for enlisted, active-duty OIF/OEF-era veterans. Veterans who have completed the TTT program were high quality teachers,

boasted good classroom management skills, had several desirable attributes, were confident in their abilities, and exhibited a desire to work with young people to make a difference in society (Feistritzer, 2005; Nunnery et al., 2009; Owings et al., 2006). Veterans offer a deep pool of potentially successful teacher candidates to address the growing teacher shortage in America and they have the education benefits to help in this endeavor. Therefore, exploring both the enablers and inhibitors for veterans to complete a teacher education program can help all agencies and people involved in higher education to increase the enablers and help remove the inhibitors for veterans.

How the Literature Review Relates to the Study

The review of literature explored the background of education benefits for veterans, provided a history of veterans in college to include contemporary issues, and outlined inhibitors for veterans in college. There were a variety of inhibitors, which include mental health/health/injury, financial issues, information/bureaucratic issues, family responsibilities, and other inhibitors. The literature review also examined enablers that helped veterans overcome obstacles, which included personal characteristics, a holistic approach by the university, a veteran-friendly campus, a learning community and orientation for student veterans, and faculty and staff training in veterans' needs. Finally, it outlined the teacher shortage issues in the U.S. and current research on veterans as teachers, which indicated that they have desirable characteristics and were successful in both classroom management and instruction.

Veterans have had a long history of using education benefits to attend college and a history of doing well in college. Benefits are a strong enabler that allows veterans to attend college, but there are several inhibitors to attending or completing a teacher

51

education program that may cause the veteran to withdraw from college before using the benefits and making the best use of them. There is a shortage of teachers, especially in high-needs areas that veterans have historically been willing to work in. Research shows that veterans have a history of being effective teachers when they complete a teacher education program and obtain a teaching position.

However, the literature did not reveal any information about OIF/OEF-era veterans in an education program. Examination of this cohort using the three considerable education benefits offered helps provide a better understanding of the enablers and inhibitors veterans face when attending college in a teacher education program. This information will help inform further quantitative studies to generalize the data across groups, inform teacher education departments and college administrations, as well as help individual faculty in teacher education programs better support veterans. As a result, the purpose of this study was to determine inhibitors that prevent and enablers that help enlisted, active-duty OIF/OEF-era veterans complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification.

Deficiencies in the Literature

While there was a fair amount of research on the topic of veteran's education, there is a lack research on the topic of veterans in teacher education programs. The Troops to Teachers program has been studied, but that program is not for the average active-duty veteran. Instead, it caters to those who have served for 6-20 years ("Troops to Teachers", 2012) and a majority of the participants are former officers (Feistritzer et al., 1998). Since it is likely that a majority of active-duty veterans would have the skills and aptitude to become effective teachers, this study contributes to the literature in

several ways. No studies have been conducted to determine the enablers and inhibitors for veterans to complete a teacher education program using education benefits and initial certification. The majority of research focused on inhibitors for veterans in college in general, and there is far less emphasis on how veterans were able to overcome these inhibitors (enablers). The fact that veterans were a viable source for filling teacher needs in America (McCree, 1993; Feistritzer, 2005), that they were successful teachers (Bank, 2007; Nunnery et al., 2009; Owings et al., 2005), and that they have education benefits to help enable the completion of the program are all salient reasons for studying this topic. In addition, this research has the potential to extend or reveal new information that can inform future studies, help colleges and universities better serve veterans, and possibly influence policy.

Summary

Veterans have a long history of attending college and a track record of success, making them practical candidates to help address the teacher shortages in the United States (Angrist & Chen, 2011; Bank, 2007; Kiester, 1994). There are more than 2 million veterans returning from the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq that may be enrolling in colleges and universities (ACE, 2008, 2009; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009) to use the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which pays for all the tuition, a living allowance, and books (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 2012). While education benefits was one type of enabler, there were numerous inhibitors that can combine to result in veterans not completing college, as well as several enablers to help overcome the inhibitors.

There were several potential inhibitors for veterans who have served since 9/11, however, which include mental health issues or injury issues, which may increase stress

and make attending college extremely difficult (DiRamio et al., 2008; Rumann &
Hamrick, 2010). Financial issues inhibit veterans attending college using education
benefits. These issues range from a delay in benefits because of scheduling, financing
college and paying bills even with education benefits (ACE, 2009), and working while
attending college. Information and bureaucratic issues inhibit veterans in several ways.
Obtaining college credit for military experience proves difficult and sometimes
impossible for veterans (ACE, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008). Lack of information and
outreach were inhibitors as well, which may prove too much to overcome (ACE, 2009).
Student services at institutions vary and were inconsistent, proving at some universities to
be enablers (Spaulding, 2000) while they were severely inhibiting at others (Cook &
Kim, 2009; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009). Family responsibilities were a legitimate
concern for veterans as well, as veterans were more likely to be married than nonveterans
(Hogan & Seifert, 2010) as well as more likely to be divorced (Lundquist, 2007). Raising
children while attending college and time management were also factors that inhibit
college attendance by veterans, making it more difficult to continue attending and
meeting requirements of a degree program. Finally, other inhibitors included a
background of lower-SES with little information on attending college (ACE, 2008),
difficulty in transitioning from military to college (Steele et al., 2010), and differences in
maturity between veterans and traditional students (Gwin et al., 2012).

In addition to inhibitors, veterans also had a range of possible enablers that could
possibly serve to help them complete college and a teacher education program.
Resourcefulness and tenacity on the part of the veteran was perhaps the most important
enabler to overcome inhibiting obstacles (Murphy, 2011). Veteran's service officers at

the university could also be a great enabler as well, although Bauman (2009) reports that these people were inhibitors, so it likely differs by institution. A holistic approach was recommended to become veteran friendly (DiRamio et al., 2008; Selber et al., 2011). Being veteran friendly included peer organizations for veterans, one-stop services, and other ways to make veterans feel welcome (ACE, 2008). Veteran specific orientation, veteran-specific resource center, and a student veteran organization were also identified as enabling veterans to complete college (DiRamio et al; Gwin et al., 2012; Murphy, 2011).

Since there is a shortage of teachers in the U.S., veterans can help fill this gap by completing a teacher education program. There is a shortage of teachers of foreign language, bilingual education; mathematics, reading specialist, science, and special education are high-need fields in American education (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Military retirees and veterans served as a pool of potential teachers to fill in the gaps, willing to work in the areas of highest need, Parker (1992) and Watt (1987) report. By removing inhibitors and enhancing enablers, veterans can be encouraged to complete teacher education programs, meeting the needs of both our schools and individual veterans.

Finally, research on veterans as teachers in specific programs such as Troops to Teachers indicated that veterans were effective teachers in classrooms and had the characteristics sought by administrators (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002). Veterans had leadership skills that transfer well to teaching (Stidd, 2012) and had effective discipline and classroom management (Bank, 2007). This resulted in veterans being successful in the classroom and able to perform

well. In addition, veterans wanted to make a difference and serve by working with young people (Feistritzer, 2005).

As this literature review points out, there were several compelling reasons to explore the enablers and inhibitors for using education benefits to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial teacher certification for enlisted, active-duty OIF/OEF-era veterans. Veterans offer a readily available group of potentially successful teacher candidates to address the growing teacher shortage in America and they have the education benefits to help in this endeavor. Further exploration of the enablers and inhibitors can help those involved to increase the enablers and help remove the inhibitors for veterans as well as help place effective teachers in high-needs areas in America's classrooms.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Design and Methodology

This chapter outlines the research process used to conduct a qualitative multiple case study. It describes the research questions, design, and a chapter summary for this study. Research design and rationale includes 1) participants and sites, 2) data collection, 3) data analysis, 4) validity and reliability issues, and 5) protection of human subjects.

A multiple-case study approach (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2008) was used to explore the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification. This design is appropriate because this research is exploratory and grounded, whereas there is no set theoretical framework from which to complete the research because it has not been developed yet. The case study approach allowed the researcher to become immersed in the data as well as to get to know the participants well. In order to find out as many of the enablers and inhibitors as possible, a deep understanding of each participant and data saturation was necessary. This design allowed the researcher to open code responses, ask follow-up questions, and organize information in a grounded way. This design permitted the researcher to develop the research as it flowed and to be responsive to possible changes that were required. It will also be able to inform later research as well.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to explore the enablers and inhibitors that enlisted, active-duty OIF/OEF-era veterans may confront when using education benefits such as

the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas. The research question for this study is: What are the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas using education benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, after serving on active duty? Research sub-questions are as follows:

1. What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

2. What are the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

3. How can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

4. How can teacher education programs support the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

5. Why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not?

6. Why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others?

Research Design and Rationale

A multiple-case study approach (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2008) was used to explore the enablers and inhibitors for enlisted, active-duty OIF-OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program using education benefits at two sites within the same system in Texas: both universities are designated as veteran-friendly, but only one of which is given positive recommendations by veterans who have reviewed the school. A small purposeful sample (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2007) was utilized so participants

could "purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2007, p. 125), which was the inhibitors and enablers for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program.

According to Creswell (1994), the qualitative paradigm assumes that reality is subjective and can be seen in multiple ways by participants, the researcher interacts with the participants, and acknowledges the fact that values are present. Hatch (2002) notes that the constructivist paradigm assumes that there are multiple realities as experienced by different individuals and that knowledge is subjectively constructed. This requires the researcher to be involved and included in the subjective reality that the participants experience in order to get to understand those experiences better. Qualitative research uses a personal voice and often is an inductive process with categories emerging during the research process (Creswell, 1994; Hatch, 2002). The fact that there is no research that currently exists on veterans using education benefits to complete a teacher education program, a qualitative study is appropriate to determine what the variables are that act as enabling factors as well as inhibitors for veterans (Creswell, 1994, 2003, 2007).

A multiple-case study was appropriate for this research question because the case was bounded (Creswell, 1994, 2003, 2007; Yin, 2008) by the following: OIF/OEF-era veterans in a teacher education program, use of education benefits (GI Bill or Hazlewood Exemption), and mid-sized universities located in Texas, both of which are designated as veteran-friendly, but only one of which is given positive recommendations by veterans who have reviewed the school (G.I. Jobs, 2013a; G.I. Jobs, 2013b). Therefore, an inductive approach was utilized to understand the enablers and inhibitors, where the

researcher: 1) gathered information, 2) asked questions, 3) formed categories, 4) looked for patterns, and 5) compared the pattern with other theories (Creswell, 1994, p. 96).

Participants and Sites

There were 163 colleges in Texas; one hundred eight public and 55 private, according to Cappex (2013). Of these colleges, G.I. Jobs (2013c) reported that there were one hundred nineteen colleges offering classroom or online classes, and also have a physical campus, that are veteran-friendly. Clearly, Texas is a state that values veterans overall and institutions work hard to serve this large population in the state. The size of the universities varies greatly, so mid-sized universities were sought for this study.

Participants were recruited from a mid-sized, veteran-friendly university in south central Texas that was recommended by veterans and a similar mid-sized university from within the same system that was designated as veteran-friendly, but that had zero positive reviews from veterans (G.I. Jobs, 2013a, 2013b). Both sites were considered veteran-friendly, as per the criteria outlined by Pavelek (2011), but one site had 83 positive recommendations by veterans and the other had zero. In order to be designated as veteran-friendly by *G.I. Jobs* magazine, there were specific criteria which were required to be met. Criteria included 1) discounted tuition for military and dependents, 2) generous and smooth credit transfer policies, 3) private schools participating in the VA Yellow Ribbon program, 4) in-state tuition waivers for servicemembers, 5) counselors and staff dedicated specifically to veterans, 6) special policies for deployments, 7) accreditation, 8) student veteran groups, 9) flexible scheduling and attendance options, and 10) an understanding of veterans and willingness to work with them (Pavelek, 2011). The institution with the veteran-friendly designation and veteran recommendations,

Irondale State University, had 2,243 veterans enrolled out of a population of 34,000 students (G.I. Jobs, 2013b). The other veteran-friendly institution, Brooklake University, which had no positive veteran reviews, had 1,100 student veterans out of a total population of 14,000 students (G.I. Jobs, 2013a).

Participants were required to have the specific characteristics or have experienced the phenomena under study (Creswell, 2007; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 1998). These characteristics include participants who are OIF/OEF-era veterans enrolled in a teacher education program in Texas. For this study, a typical case sample (Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994) was sought, as this type of sample "highlights what is normal or average" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). In addition, there were criteria that the sample participants were required to meet, which included the fact that they served in the military during the OIF-OEF-era and are enrolled in a teacher education program and seeking initial certification in Texas. Creswell (2007) notes, however, that sampling strategies may need to change during the research process and that investigators must remain flexible, so flexibility was sought by the researcher at all times during the research.

Access to the sites and participants was obtained by contacting the veterans office at each university (not a federal but university office), who served as gatekeepers (Creswell, 2007) at two universities in Texas. After explaining the research to these gatekeepers, the researcher asked them to email a pre-written letter from the researcher explaining the research and that participants were sought (Creswell, 2007). Participants were then asked to contact the researcher if they would volunteer to participate in the study. Regarding the question of sample size, Creswell (2007) advises that researchers

study a small number of sites or individuals and "also to collect extensive detail about each site or individual studied" (p. 126). Seidman (2006) asserts that there are two criteria for determining if there are enough participants: 1) sufficient numbers to represent the range of possible participants, and 2) saturation of information, whereas the researcher is not learning anything new. A range of participants was recruited and saturation was attained via interviews, participant journaling, follow-up questions, and additional sources of information.

Characteristics of Sites

Two universities were selected as sites for this qualitative multiple case-study. Both universities are public universities in the Texas State University System. Both universities have a student veteran population and a Veterans Affairs office at the university. In order to conceal identification of the actual sites while providing accurate information, pseudonyms are used for both university sites.

Site 1: Irondale State University

Irondale State University (ISU) is a public doctoral-granting university that began as a Normal School. A member of the Texas State University System, ISU has a total student population of over 34,000 students (Irondale State University, 2012a). There are 96 Bachelor's Degree programs, 87 Master's Degree programs, and 12 Doctoral Degree programs offered at ISU. According to G.I. Jobs (2013b), there were 2,243 military students enrolled at ISU in 2012-2013. In-state tuition and fees at ISU for 2012-2013 were $8,770 and out-of-state tuition and fees $19,302 (U.S. News & World Report, 2013b).

ISU is designated as veteran-friendly by G.I. Jobs (2013b). ISU had a Veterans

Advisory Council in place to address gaps in services and address them (Irondale State

University, 2012c; White, 2011) as well as a Veterans Alliance, which is a student

organization linked with the national Student Veterans of America organization (Irondale

State University, 2012c). The mission statement of the Veteran Alliance reads as

follows:

> To ensure that veterans currently enrolled and veterans entering the university are aware of all organizations, services, and opportunities afforded to them. To establish a sense of pride in service, provide networking, and create a platform for which their voice may be heard. (Irondale State University, 2012e).

The Veterans Advisory Council was created in 2008 to include faculty and staff to

facilitate a smooth transition for student veterans at ISU (Irondale State University,

2012d).

According to G.I. Jobs (2013b), ISU is veteran-friendly based on the following

characteristics: 1) it is regionally accredited, 2) it is VA approved, 3) it accepts College

Level Examination Program (CLEP), 4) is part of the Servicemembers Opportunity

Colleges (SOC) System, 5) is part of the DANTES (Defense Activity for Non-Traditional

Education Support) external degree catalog, 6) gives credit for CLEP and/or DSST

(DANTES Subject Standardized Tests) exams (maximum of 90 credits), 7) accepts the

ACE recommendations for awarding credit for CLEP and/or DSST, and 8) gives ACE

credit for military training and experience (G.I. Jobs, 2013b). ISU requires that all

transfer credits have a GPA of 2.25 and that 25% of the degree requirements be

completed at ISU. In addition, G.I. Jobs (2013b) ranks ISU in the top 15% of military-

friendly programs in the country. ISU is regularly asked to provide technical assistance

to other universities on how to become veteran-friendly.

ISU offers in-state tuition without residency for active-duty military students; military students can be called to active service without penalty, in-state tuition without residency for military dependents, and participates in the MyCAA (Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts) program (G.I. Jobs, 2013b). ISU works to be flexible as well, offering evening and weekend programs, classroom-based programs on military installations, and has an on-campus living requirement for students at any point in their enrollment that is waived for veterans (G.I. Jobs, 2013b).

The ISU web site had a specific web site for the Office of Veterans Affairs sponsored by the university and not the VA. On the site on the first page was a calendar with Hazlewood and GI Bill submission deadlines on it. There were links for GI Bill Benefit Program, Hazlewood Exemption & Legacy, Forms, Miscellaneous Scholarships, Student Resources, and Contacts. In the Student Resources tab, there was information from the Department of Veterans Affairs (federal agency), a newsletter, a student booklet for veterans, direct deposit and address change information, a link to the Veteran Alliance at Irondale State as well as to the Veterans Advisory Council, a dependent benefits guide, new student orientation, and a national resource directory. There was a great deal of information available for student veterans, and the location of the office as well as phone number and email was posted on top of the first page (Irondale State University, 2012c).

ISU offered a wide array of military support, according to G.I. Jobs (2013b). These include an ROTC program, full-time veteran counselors or advisors on staff, and an advisor that assists veterans with career placement. The veteran counselors work to coordinate activities with local veteran representatives for career placement, identify military dependents on campus, and child care facilities are available on campus (G.I.

Jobs, 2013b). Socially, ISU had campus or social events specifically planned for veterans, veteran clubs or associations on campus, a chapter of the Student Veterans of America on campus, a veteran-specific page on the web site, and military spouse clubs or associations on campus (G.I. Jobs, 2013b). In addition, G.I. Jobs (2013b) offered a glowing endorsement as to why ISU is an excellent choice for military members, which described the veteran-specific orientation, open house, and transition to campus as well as a continuum of services offered to student veterans.

The teacher education program at ISU is accredited by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) (Irondale State University, 2012b). The College of Education at ISU offers Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral Degrees, as well as Certification and Masters of Education (CMED) and Teacher Recruitment Program (TRP) Masters of Education (Irondale State University, 2012b). There are three academic departments in the ISU College of Education: 1) Curriculum and Instruction, 2) Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education, and School Psychology, and 3) Health and Human Performance (Irondale State University, 2012b). ISU offers certifications in

- Grades EC-6
- Grades 4-8
- Grades 8-12
- All level (Grades EC-12)
- Special education (Irondale State University, 2012b).

ISU has a lot to offer to student veterans in the way of teacher education and works to ensure that student veterans are able to transition to college successfully.

Site 2: Brooklake University

Brooklake University (BU), which began as a junior college, is a public Doctoral-granting institution today, and is a part of the Texas State University System (Brooklake

University, 2013a). With over 14,000 students and 100 programs leading to Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral Degrees, BU boasts small student-to faculty ratios and is accredited. BU had 1,100 military or veteran students and 125 military dependents enrolled in 2012-2013 (G.I. Jobs, 2013a). In-state tuition and fees at BU for 2012-2013 were $8,554 and out-of-state tuition and fees were $20,574 (U.S. News & World Report, 2013a).

According to G.I. Jobs (2013a), BU was also veteran-friendly, and although the institution offered similar veteran-friendly practices to ISU, there were some differences. These include 1) it is regionally accredited, 2) it is VA approved, 3) it accepts College Level Examination Program (CLEP), 4) is part of the SOC System, 5) is part of the DANTES external degree catalog, 6) gives credit for CLEP and/or DSST exams (maximum of 30 credits), 7) accepts the ACE recommendations for awarding credit for CLEP and/or DSST, and 8) gives ACE credit for military training and experience (G.I. Jobs, 2013a).

BU offered financial benefits which include tuition discounts for military students and veterans, in-state tuition without residency for active-duty military students; military students can be called to active service without penalty, and participated in the MyCAA program (G.I. Jobs, 2013a). In addition, BU offered evening and weekend programs to enhance flexibility for students (G.I. Jobs, 2013a).

The BU web site had a specific page for Veterans Affairs that was sponsored by the University. On the page was a description of the location, contact information, followed by an overview of the different educational benefits programs available for veterans and a description of each (Brooklake University, 2013c). There were also a few

66

hyperlinks for more information on veteran's education benefits, charts that outline payment amounts for each type of benefit, and three frequently called numbers at the very bottom of the page (Brooklake University, 2013c). There were no calendars or links for forms that veterans were required to complete, no link or information on orientation specifically for veterans, nor was there any information on any student veteran's organization on campus. Overall, the site was difficult to navigate and did not contain information that is necessary for veterans to complete all the requirements to obtain education benefits.

BU does offer a wide array of military support, according to G.I. Jobs (2013a). This support included being an SOC member, an ROTC program, full-time veteran counselors or advisors on staff, and the veteran counselors coordinate activities with local veteran representatives for career placement (G.I. Jobs, 2013a). However, there was no advisor that assists veterans with career placement, the university did not identify military dependents on campus, and child care facilities were not available on campus (G.I. Jobs, 2013a). Socially, BU has campus or social events specifically planned for veterans, veteran clubs or associations on campus, and a veteran-specific page on the web site (G.I. Jobs, 2013a). There was a web page with some information, such as membership criteria and officers, as well as a link to a Facebook page for the student veteran group, the 23rd Cardinal Command, but the last update was in September 2012 ("23rd Cardinal Command", 2013). Finally, G.I. Jobs (2013a) offered an endorsement as to why BU was an excellent choice for military members, which describes the university's membership in the Servicemembers Opportunity College and explains the role of the coordinator of military programs who advises military and veteran students.

The teacher education program at BU is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (G.I. Jobs, 2013a). The College of Education at BU offers Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral Degrees, as well as a Post-Baccalaureate Certification Program and Certification Only for students who already possess a Master's Degree. There are five academic departments in the BU College of Education: 1) Educational Leadership, 2) Counseling and Special Education, 3) Professional Pedagogy, 4) Family and Consumer Science, and 5) Health and Kinesiology (Brooklake University, 2013b). BU offers education certifications in

- Grades EC-6 generalist
- Grades 4-8 English
- Language Arts & Reading
- Grades 4-8 Math
- Grades 4-8 Math/Science
- Grades 4-8 Composite Science
- Grades 4-8 Social Studies
- Grades 4-8 Generalist
- Grades EC-12 Special Education (Brooklake University, 2013b)

Summary of Sites

Irondale State University and Brooklake University share some characteristics, although there were notable differences. Both sites were considered veteran-friendly by G.I. Jobs (2013a, 2013b), but ISU ranked in the top 15% of military-friendly programs in the country. ISU was regularly asked to provide technical assistance to other universities on how to become veteran-friendly and was a well-respected university on the topic of assisting student veterans. Both universities had a comprehensive teacher education program and offered a wide range of possible teaching licensures. Table 1 provides the characteristics of the university sites used in this study.

68

Table 1

Characteristics of Veteran-Friendly* University Sites

Characteristic	Irondale State University	Brooklake University
In-state tuition for military/veterans	✓	✓
Veteran's advisory group for campus	✓	-
Special policies for deployments	✓	✓
Participates in MyCAA program^	✓	✓
Accreditation	✓	✓
Student veteran groups	✓	✓
Flexible scheduling and attendance	✓	✓
Willingness to work with veterans	✓	-
Veteran endorsement	✓	-
VA approved	✓	✓
Credit transfer policies:		
- Accepts CLEP program^^	✓	✓
- Part of SOC System^^^	✓	✓
- Part of DANTES external Catalog^^^^	✓	✓
- Accepts ACE credit transfer	✓	✓
Staff dedicated to veterans:		
- Full-time veteran counselors/staff	✓	✓
- Advisor for veterans	✓	-

* Based on G.I. Jobs, 2013a; 2013b; Pavelek, 2011

^ Military Spouse Career Advancement Account

^^ College Level Examinatin Program

^^^ Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges

^^^^ Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support

Data Collection

Approval from the Institutional Review Board was obtained for this research, ensuring that the rights of the participants were protected (Creswell, 2007). Semi-structured one-on-one interviews (Creswell, 2007) were then conducted with a purposeful sample (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2007) of OIF/OEF-era veterans in teacher education programs at the two universities in Texas.

According to Creswell (2007), there are specific steps in the case study process, which he describes as circular: 1) locating the sites/individuals, 2) gaining access and

establishing rapport, 3) purposefully sampling, 4) collecting data, 5) recording

information, 6) resolving field issues, and 7) storing data. Although most research begins

with locating the sites/individuals, researchers can begin at nearly any point in the

process. The process outlined above was followed in this research design.

Creswell (2007) offers four basic forms of data, which includes observations,

interviews, audio-visual materials, and documents (p. 129). It is important to store

qualitative data by backing up computer files, using high-quality recording equipment,

developing a master list of types of information gathered, protecting anonymity of

participants by masking names in the data, and developing a data collection matrix as a

visual way to locate information (Creswell, 2007, p. 142-143). All data was backed up

on a university computer, along with a master list of information and pseudonyms for

each participant, to ensure anonymity.

Data was collected through qualitative interviews, participant journaling, follow-

up phone calls and emails, and documentation, where possible. According to Hatch

(2002), interviews in case study research are structured because the interviewer leads the

interview and there is a time limit, but they are also unstructured because, even though

there is a list of guiding questions, informants can lead the discussion in different

directions as the conversation continues. Huberman and Miles (1994) assert that

interviews may be structured or unstructured, depending on the researcher. In addition to

files kept on a computer, Huberman and Miles (1994) also note that there are physical

items to be filed when conducting qualitative research. These items can include

interview tapes, transcripts, notes, and other forms of evidence collected during the data

collection phase. A suitable filing system must be established to be able to store, retain,

and retrieve this information when necessary, which is what was done for this study (Huberman & Miles, 1994). Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and each participant was asked to provide documentation in the form of discharge papers, college transcripts, and military training documentation.

Seidman (2006) recommends a three-interview series for qualitative research because it helps establish the context in which participants live. Interview one focuses on the life history of the informant "in light of the topic" (p. 17) up to the interview time. Interview two asks for details of the particular lived experience of the informant regarding the topic under study. Finally, interview three focuses on asking the participants to reflect on the meaning of their experiences. Seidman (2006) continues, recommending a 90-minute format and that the interviews are paced 3-7 days apart from each other, in order to give the informant time to digest and reflect on the preceding interview. Scheduling issues precluded the researcher from spacing three interviews apart, but each participant agreed to complete all parts of the interview in one sitting, as each part of the process was only about 20-30 minutes.

Participant journaling, according to Seidman (2006), is useful for participants to help them process their experiences after reflection in a different way. Journals provide a way to understand the feelings, ideas, and insights of participants. In addition, journals are flexible, allowing the informant to enter data at his or her leisure. Participants were asked to journal for at least 20 minutes within 24 hours of each interview. These were electronic and were collected as soon as they were completed through email. A set of guiding questions (Seidman, 2006) was provided to help participants focus their journals and give them something specific to write about. These questions included: 1) What

insights, feelings, or ideas have you had regarding our discussion today? 2) What else would you tell me if you could? 3) Now that you have had some time to process the experience, is there anything else that comes to mind that you did not think of during the interview?

Creswell (2007) declares that there is a series of steps in the interview process, which include: 1) identifying interviewees, 2) determining type of interview to conduct, 3) record the interview, 4) develop and use an interview protocol, 5) refine the interview questions through pilot testing, 6) determine a quiet, distraction free interview site, 7) obtain consent upon arrival at the interview site, and 8) follow the interview protocol and complete the interview in the time allotted (p. 133-134). These steps were used to guide the interview process in this study.

In order to conduct a successful interview, the interviewer must develop and follow a protocol (Creswell, 2007; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Yin, 2008). Yin (2008) declared that a protocol is absolutely necessary for multiple-case study design and contributes to reliability. Components of a protocol include a heading, opening statements, main research questions to be asked, probes to follow key questions, transition messages and reminders for the interviewer, space for notes during the interview, and space for reflective notes by the researcher (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2008).

The number of questions can vary, but they should be mostly open-ended (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Yin, 2008). Good interview questions are open-ended to give participants opportunities to share their experiences and perspectives, use language that is familiar to the participants, are clear and neutral, respect the informants and assume they have valuable knowledge and experiences, and generate answers related to

72

the objectives of the research project (Hatch, 2002). Good interview questions were developed using this set of criteria.

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) assert that the setting in which an interview takes place is important and that it should be natural, free of distractions, and allow the interviewee to be comfortable. Rapport must be established with the participant, which means getting along with him or her, but it must also be controlled, to avoid having too much or too little, both of which are detrimental (Seidman, 2006). During the interview, the researcher should keep a copy of the interview protocol in front of him or herself and make notes on it as the interview progresses (Hatch, 2002).

These steps were followed in the interview process. Interviewees contacted the researcher to volunteer to participate in semi-structured interviews; the interviews were recorded in a distraction-free site. An interview protocol was approved by the IRB and was followed for each interview. Participants provided written consent and the interview protocol was followed, allowing for each volunteer to add information wherever they felt necessary.

Effective interviewing techniques include following the rules of polite conversation, talking less and listening more, listening actively, and exploring the understandings of informants by prompting or encouraging more detail (Hatch, 2002). Seidman (2006) advised not interrupting when following up, asking follow-up questions when the researcher does not understand something, following hunches, tolerating silence, and "ask[ing] participants to reconstruct, not to remember" (p. 88) when asking for details about an event. Finally, interviews should be recorded and transcribed verbatim, in their entirety, soon after completion (Creswell, 2007; Hancock & Algozzine,

2006; Hatch, 2002; Seidman, 2006; Yin, 2008). The researcher purposefully followed these techniques to ensure effective interviews.

Data Analysis

According to Hatch (2002), qualitative analysis is inductive, proceeding from the specific to the general. Inductive analysis begins with individual pieces of evidence and puts them together into a whole that provides meaning, and includes searching for patterns in the data that lead to more general statements about the phenomena or case can be made (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 1998). Creswell (1994) explained that data analysis occurs simultaneously with data collection and interpretation, which helps inform the study and the direction of future research.

According to Creswell (2003, 2007), data analysis is spiral in form because the steps are interrelated and sometimes occur simultaneously. Data management is the first loop in the spiral, where data is organized and converted into text units for analysis. This means transcribing interviews verbatim. Next, the researcher gets a sense of the whole database by reading interview transcripts several times and trying to understand the interview as a whole before breaking it up (Creswell, 2007; Seidman, 2006). During this step, memos and notes were written in the margins (Creswell, 2007; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Seidman, 2006). Creswell (2007) notes that these "memos are short phrases, ideas, or key concepts" (p. 151) that occur to the researcher as he or she is reading.

The next step in data analysis consists of describing, classifying, and interpreting, where the researcher describes, in detail, what is being studied. Classification includes developing codes for information or themes that are present in the research. Creswell (2007) advised starting with 5-6 tentative codes and adding as necessary, but

74

recommended having a maximum of 25-30 codes. Huberman and Miles (1994) asserted

that the codes can then be counted for frequency for comparison. Codes can be named

from exact words used by participants (in vivo codes), drawn from scientific literature, or

made up by the researcher (Creswell, 2007). After codes were developed, they should be

analyzed and formed into 5-7 general themes, or families of findings. "In the process of

interpretation, researchers step back and form larger meanings of what is going on in the

situation or sites" (Creswell, 2007, p. 154). The final step in the data analysis consists of

the researcher presenting the data in a visual, text, or tabular form to show relationships

and findings (Creswell, 2007; Huberman & Miles, 1994).

In case study analysis, Creswell (2007) declared that a description of the case is

the first step in interpretation and representation. Data was analyzed by looking for

patterns in the data, looking at a single instance and draw meaning from it, or comparing

cases and seeking several instances of a category or theme, and interpreted as such.

Naturalistic generalizations were then developed from the data, which are

"generalizations that people can learn from the case either for themselves or apply to a

population of cases" (p. 163). In multiple-case studies, there are two levels of analysis:

1) within-case analysis and 2) cross-case analysis. In within-case analysis, each case was

treated as a study in itself and analyzed as such (Merriam, 1998). Within-case analysis

consists of a description of what is occurring and how it is happening with the researcher

attempting to explain why the phenomenon occurred (Huberman & Miles, 1994) Cross-

case analysis involves analyzing data across cases, searching out both similarities and

contradictions (Merriam, 1998; Huberman & Miles, 1994). Creswell (2007) offered a

visual template for representing a multiple-case study, which first includes a case context

and case description for each case, within-case analysis for each case, a cross-case

analysis which offers similarities and differences, and assertions and generalizations (p.

172). These come together to provide an in-depth portrait of the cases.

Validity and Reliability

Qualitative research allows the researcher to make adjustments to instruments or

protocols to avoid errors made in the field, which increases internal validity (Huberman

& Miles, 1994). Qualitative validity was sought using member checking, triangulation of

the data, clarifying researcher bias, providing a rich, thick description of the findings, and

presenting negative information that contradicts the themes (Creswell, 2003, 2007;

Huberman & Miles, 1994; Yin, 2008). In member checking, the "investigator takes

summaries of the findings (e.g. case studies, major themes, theoretical model) back to

key participants in the study and asks them whether the findings are an accurate reflection

of their experiences" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010, p. 135). Member checking ensures

that the conclusions drawn by the researcher are accurate and complete (Yin, 2008).

Triangulation entails using data from multiple sources, such as interviews, survey

questionnaires, and documentation, which contributes to reliability in case study research

(Yin, 2008). Data was triangulated with cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2008), building

evidence for a code or theme from several sources (Creswell, 2007). Any bias the

researcher has been clarified, and a rich, thick description of the findings (Merriam,

1998), to include information that contradicts the themes, is also included to ensure

validity (Creswell, 2003, 2007). External validity was increased by studying several

participants in a number of settings, which enhanced the generalizability of the findings

(Huberman & Miles, 1994; Merriam, 1998).

To ensure reliability, a chain of evidence has been maintained so an outside observer can trace the evidence in the case study from one point to another (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2008) and detailed field notes were also kept during the recording of the interviews (Creswell, 2007).

Protection of Human Subjects

To ensure that human subjects were protected at all times and to reassure respondents that their identities will remain confidential, they were notified of this fact in the consent form that describes the study. There were no known physical or psychological risks to the subjects. All data collected has been completely confidential and anonymously coded to insure privacy of all participants. Names of participants remained confidential and will not be cited in the study or possible future publications. To maintain confidentiality, the participant names on all paperwork have been removed and coded. Pseudonyms were used in any publications or presentations done in relation to the study. All data will be destroyed and disposed of upon completion of the study. Print documents will be shredded and audio and electronic documents will be erased or deleted. Until that time it has and will continue to be in a locked facility under the researcher's supervision.

The privacy of those volunteering for the study has been guarded with great care. The original ID numbers assigned to participants has been replaced with pseudonyms that cannot be traced to individual participants. The said electronic files are also password protected for security. No additional individual identifying information will ever be entered into this database. No individually identifying information will be contained within the final work products submitted for publication and public dissemination.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the research methods that have been utilized for this dissertation. This was a multiple-case study of OIF/OEF-era enlisted, active duty veterans enrolled in a teacher education program leading to initial certification. Qualitative interviews were conducted to determine the inhibitors and enabling factors that contribute to completing a teacher education program using education benefits for enlisted active duty veterans.

Participants were recruited from a mid-sized campus in Texas that was designated as veteran-friendly and positively reviewed by veterans as well as a veteran-friendly university that was not positively reviewed by veterans (G.I. Jobs, 2013a, 2013b). Qualitative one-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with four veterans, two of whom attended each university in the same system. Interviews were recorded and transcribed to be analyzed using cross-case synthesis, as outlined by Yin (2008), noting themes that emerge. Themes and cases that did not fit the analysis were analyzed as well, with follow-up information sought in some cases to clarify issues. Validity was sought using member checking, triangulation of data, and providing a rich, thick description of findings.

As the analysis continued, the researcher maintained contact with three participants, obtaining follow-up information as necessary. One participant declined to respond to follow-up calls or emails. A detailed analysis is provided in chapter four. The researcher analyzed the data and conducted a cross-case analysis (Yin, 2008), developing themes that emerged from the multiple-case study, which are explained in detail.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis and Findings

Research on veterans is an important and timely topic because of the number of those who have served on active duty since September 11, 2001. These veterans have educational benefits available to them upon discharge or return from deployment and serve as a potential pool of effective teachers, but many student veterans face inhibitors that keep them from completing a teacher education program. There are also enablers that help veterans overcome inhibitors or simply help them complete a teacher education program, but these are not widely known.

The research question for this study is: what are the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas using education benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, after serving on active duty? In order to address this major research question and the research sub-questions, a multiple case-study was designed. Four qualitative interviews were conducted at two universities for this study. Each of the participants was in a teacher education program seeking initial certification. Both of the universities are designated as veteran-friendly, but only Irondale State University has the endorsement of veterans (G.I. Jobs, 2013b).

Pavelek (2011) noted that veteran-friendly schools offered 1) discounted tuition for military and dependents, 2) generous and smooth credit transfer policies, 3) private schools participating in the VA Yellow Ribbon program, 4) in-state tuition waivers for servicemembers, 5) counselors and staff dedicated specifically to veterans, 6) special

policies for deployments, 7) accreditation, 8) student veteran groups, 9) flexible scheduling and attendance options, and 10) an understanding of veterans and willingness to work with them (Pavelek, 2011). There was no fixed number of characteristics that must be present, but several of the above must exist at the university in order to be considered veteran-friendly.

The interviews provided a good insight as to the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to use educational benefits such as the GI Bill or the Hazlewood Exemption to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification. The operational definition of inhibitor is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that prevents or discourages the student veteran from completing the teacher education program and initial certification. The operational definition of enabler is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that helps the student veteran overcome inhibitors and facilitates the completion of the teacher education program and initial certification. Pseudonyms have been used for both the university sites as well as for study participants.

The purpose of this study was to explore the enablers and inhibitors that enlisted, active-duty OIF/OEF-era veterans may confront when using education benefits such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas. Research sub-questions for this project are as follows:

1. What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

2. What are the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

3. How can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

4. How can teacher education programs support the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

5. Why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not?

6. Why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others?

Each of these research questions is addressed as the analysis develops in each section.

This chapter includes detailed descriptions of each participant. Why each participant chose to become a teacher is next discussed, before a complete description of a cross-case analysis of both inhibitors and enablers. Finally, findings and a summary of major themes complete the chapter.

Study Participant Descriptions

In case study analysis, Creswell (2007) declared that a description of the case is the first step in interpretation and representation. Participant descriptions are presented below. Creswell (2007) offered a template for representing a multiple-case study, which first includes a case context and case description for each case, within-case analysis for each case, a cross-case analysis which offers similarities and differences, and assertions and generalizations (p. 172). These come together to provide an in-depth portrait of the cases.

Participants were required to have the specific characteristics or have experienced the phenomena under study (Creswell, 2007; Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 1998). These characteristics include participants who are OIF/OEF-era

veterans enrolled in a teacher education program in Texas. For this study, a typical case

sample (Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994) was sought, as this type of sample

"highlights what is normal or average" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). In addition,

there were criteria that the sample participants were required to meet, which included the

fact that they served in the military during the OIF-OEF-era and are enrolled in a teacher

education program and seeking initial certification in Texas. As noted in the IRB

proposal, the names of all participants have been replaced with pseudonyms that cannot

be traced to individual participants.

Participants were recruited from two university sites for this study. Each

participant is an OIF/OEF-era veteran working to complete a teacher education program

and obtain initial certification. Josh Delgado and Randolfo Cano both attended Irondale

State University while Alfred Long and Eric Eastep attended Brooklake University.

Participant 1: Josh Delgado

Josh Delgado was born in Syracuse New York in 1966. He was forty-six years

old male who described his race as White-Hispanic mix. Josh was raised by mother in a

single-parent home where the first language was English. Nobody in the family had

graduated high school, including his mother, who dropped out around the age of sixteen.

Josh reports that his father was not in the picture at all and that he had two older sisters.

In terms of parental aspirations after high school, Josh shared that his mother had grown

up in a military family and she saw the benefits of joining the military for at least a few

years, so she really pushed him toward the military.

> Well, to be honest, my mom, being a single parent, she had always pushed me for
> the military because my grandfather had served in Korea and World War II, and,

82

you know, she thought it'd be a good move for me. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

From the beginning, the military was a potential and likely avenue for Josh to pursue as a career.

Josh did not graduate from high school, but it was not because he did not enjoy it. After his ninth-grade year, Josh's family moved from New York to California, where the high school credit system was completely different. In order to graduate under the California system, Josh would have been required to attend high school for an additional semester following his normal senior year. He reported that he wanted to attend summer school to make up his credits and graduate on time, but since he was passing his classes and had passed his tests, he was not eligible for summer school. In addition to the credit issues, Josh related that he was "distracted" in high school. When asked to explain, he explained that the main distraction was girls.

> I mean there was many times I would pull up to the school, and I had a motorcycle then too, and I would pull up there and be like, they would be like "Let's go to the beach!" Like "Well, I gotta go to…" "No, really, come on! Let's go to the beach!." (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

When he knew for sure that he was not going to graduate with his class, Josh went to visit an Army recruiter to see if he could enlist without his high school diploma. He had to have a higher ASVAB score than someone with a high school diploma, which he did, and he joined the Army in 1984. After six months in the Army, Josh obtained his GED.

When Josh Delgado joined the Army, he was simply looking for a job. "It was really just for a job. I did not totally look into the benefits" (personal communication, November 9, 2012).   In 1984, he entered the delayed entry program and attended basic training in June 1985. His Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) was 63B, Light

Wheel Vehicle Mechanic. After completion of his initial three-year contract, Josh got out

of the Army.

> I went into a National Guard unit actually to make some copies—I did not plan on joining the guards but the recruiters were really good. And plus because I was in the inactive reserve they said "we could—you will get some extra—an extra ninety dollars a month, you know, fulfilling your inactive reserve time, you know, being in the Guards," so I was like "okay." (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

The extra ninety dollars per month was the main reason for signing up for the National

Guard, Josh explained.

During this time, Josh enrolled in a local community college under the Veterans

Education Assistance Program (VEAP), an educational benefit for veterans that paid very

little. He also worked as a bartender, which did not match up well with his class

schedule. Josh explained that "I guess I just was not ready to work and have the

discipline to go" (personal communication, November 9, 2012), so he dropped out.

After serving for five years in the National Guard, Josh re-enlisted for active duty

Army in 1992. The reason for re-enlisting, Josh declared, is that "jobs were a little tight.

I got married" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). Going back to active duty

allowed Josh to change from the VEAP program to the Montgomery GI Bill. He again

started to attend college while on active duty using tuition assistance available to active

duty personnel, which paid about 50% of the cost (Montgomery GI Bill benefits could

only be used after discharge). Josh was not able to obtain his Bachelor's Degree,

however, because he moved around so much while on active duty. Each college that he

attended accepted only a certain number of transfer credits, which he explained is

sometimes like almost starting over again.

Even coming here I had to—they took a lot of my credits that I had—I have been to seven other colleges. There was a few classes that they would not take. You know, core classes. So I had to go and get the syllabuses, do all the homework, and go and confront them; said "Look, you guys gave me college credit but you are not giving it to me towards core." And I think for anybody, as far as military, that is one of the toughest things, is when you are bouncing around from college to college and nobody is taking all your classes. Especially your core classes. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

After attending seven colleges on active duty, Josh was able to obtain an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Automotive Mechanics.

With regard to formal military training, Josh had a wealth of experience. His formal military training included the following: basic combat training; primary leadership development course (PLDC); basic noncommissioned officer course (BNOC); light wheel vehicle mechanic basic noncommissioned officer course; instructor training workshop; and advanced noncommissioned officer course. In addition, he had four courses which were job-specific: 1) wheeled vehicle recovery specialist; 2) additional duty safety course; 3) theater operations; and 4) Fort Bliss unit movement officer. Josh had 120 credits that Irondale State University transferred toward his general studies in his current program from his previous colleges attended and 86 credits transferred from his military experience toward his degree program.

Josh was deployed three times in his career, two times to Iraq and once to Kuwait. He spent fifteen months in Baghdad, Iraq from 2003-2004 and then again in 2007-2008 in Mosul, Iraq. His last deployment was to Kuwait to support transportation companies, where they convoyed in and out of Iraq to complete their missions.

Josh was divorced from his first wife in 2002 after nearly ten years of marriage. He was re-married to a woman also on active duty in the Army later in 2002. He had two boys from his current marriage, born in 2003 and 2005. When the Post-9/11 GI Bill was

enacted in 2009, Josh was able to transfer to it instead of having to use the Montgomery GI Bill. He retired from the Army on August 31, 2012, at the age of forty-six. Josh served for a total of 28 years in the Army.

Josh enrolled in Irondale State University after his discharge. He attended full-time during the day so he could be home with his sons when they get out of school. He was considered a senior at Irondale State University with a 3.06 grade point average and was set to graduate with his Bachelor of Science Degree in Automotive Mechanics in December 2013. His family lived several miles from Irondale State University, so driving to class was a requirement.

Participant 2: Randolfo Cano

Randolfo Cano was a twenty-six year old Hispanic male attending Irondale State University. He grew up with four siblings—an older sister, younger brother, and younger sister. "I had a typical mom and dad. I had great parents" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). When asked about his parents' educational attainment, Randolfo responded "I come from, my mom has a fifth grade education, my dad has a third grade education" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). Even though his parents did not have much education, they pushed Randolfo to attend college. "It's been important to my parents, they said 'you have the ability to study, you should do it'" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). Randolfo explained that they did not want their children to become laborers.

When asked about his high school experience, Randolfo shared that "I actually had a pretty good high school experience, with the exception of freshman year where I was still kind of lost" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). When Randolfo

86

was in seventh grade, his family moved from one side of town, which was low socioeconomic status to another side which was more middle class. When describing this move, Randolfo expressed that while it was the same town, the difference was almost night and day. He described where they moved as "more middle class, you know, higher Caucasian population, a lot less drugs, a lot less violence. You're safer. It's not what kind of shoes you wear. It's kind of like 'Hey, maybe we should do our math homework'" (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012). This move was dramatic for Randolfo; he explained that his eighth and ninth-grade years in high school were years of transition, in which he struggled. When describing his difficulties adjusting to his new surroundings and expectations, Randolfo stated

> I hate to be really critical of things but it's almost like I was finally living—this [new] world is so much different from this [old] one—like I feel like we have to assimilate to be successful. I think sometimes you get lost in a bad subculture. Low SES can mean that's going to happen sometimes. So when I came here my adjustment period was really hard. I had to pretty much reinvent who I was, so that took time. (personal communication, November 9, 2012).

The last three years of high school for Randolfo were terrific, he related, as he became involved in cross country and track. Being involved in these activities gave him an area in which to be successful. Even though school was not his favorite thing in the world, he did like going.

It was during this time in high school, however, that Randolfo became interested in attending college. He shared that he was not really interested in college and said that it was not something that people like him did.

> I'm the first person out of my entire family—second cousins, third cousins—that earned a four-year degree. And I'm the first one that even stepped foot in a college classroom. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

During his senior year in high school he was in upper-level courses and he was competitive in both cross-country and track, which he said made him competitive in everything. His friends were all smart, and Randolfo exclaims that if "you surround yourself with smart people, then it's cool to be smart. Now you want to be smart" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). His friends were studying for the ACT, so he approached his parents to pay for the preparation course that was several hundred dollars, and they did. Randolfo was not sure of the process to apply for college and consequently did not seek out colleges, but since his friends were applying, he figured he should as well. He received three applications to universities in the mail at his house and those were the only three schools he applied to, and was accepted to all three. He was also only able to make one college visit so he chose to visit Augustana College in Rock Island, IL. When he got there, he was greeted by name and felt that they really cared about him and that he mattered there, which is not what he expected.

> And then I did one college visit just because I didn't have time or the resources to go and I went to Augustana College. It was two and a half hours straight west. So I remember going with my sister. When I stepped foot in there I said something like that, and I mentioned my name or something, and some lady just running by and grabbed my folder. "Oh you're [Randolfo], so nice to meet you." That made such a profound impact that someone knows who I am, that I matter here. That's probably why I ended up going there. So it kind of worked out. It's new when you just feel accepted somewhere so that's good. It's not what I expected, I guess. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

He chose to attend Augustana because he felt accepted there and by the time he was through with the process, Randolfo felt that college would give him a chance to grow as a person. He was the first person in his family to ever attend college, followed by his younger brother.

Randolfo graduated from Augustana College in 2008 with a Bachelor of Arts in both History and Spanish. He is the first person in his entire extended family to earn a four-year degree. In his junior year of college, Randolfo joined the Illinois National Guard on March 1, 2007 with his brother.

> I was very anti-military. Actually, it was junior year in college when I first enlisted. It was my brother's idea; it wasn't mine. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

There was no history of military experience in the Cano family. Randolfo was initially anti-military and he described his parents as "dead-set against" it (personal communication, November 9, 2012). His younger brother had wanted to join the military for a long time and told Randolfo that he was going to join the Marine Corps in 2007. Randolfo talked him out of going active duty and convinced him to join the Army National guard. Randolfo felt a sense of responsibility to take care of his brother if he joined. Randolfo wanted to finish his degree before joining the military because he felt that the military may be a distraction or inhibitor to finishing.

> I was really opposed because I felt that he would get sidetracked, I felt that he'd probably get deployed and I don't know how he'd come back and then try to finish. That's the struggle for some people. Some people go on not to finish, some go on to have a lot of success, but not as many. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

He was concerned that the same thing would happen to his brother as well. In spite of his misgivings, Randolfo and his brother enlisted in the Illinois Army National Guard together in 2007, knowing that the odds of being deployed were very high. His MOS was 11B, Infantry.

Education benefits were not an inducement to join the military for Randolfo at all.

In fact, he had no idea that education benefits were available to him until he was signing

his enlistment papers.

> I knew nothing about the education benefits. By the time I got my student loan repayment thing, program, then I got a twenty thousand dollar bonus for enlisting infantry. But both of those things I didn't know until they messed up my contract at MEPS and my recruiter was like "Hey, have them reprint these pages," and I said "okay," and they're like "You're gonna get $20,000." I'm like "I am?" He's like "Yeah, and you're going to get your [student] loans paid for." And I'm like "I am?" He's like "How much do you owe right now." And I'm like "I don't know." He asked "Can you access that online?" I'm like "I think so," so we went into the recruiter's office at MEPS and we looked it up and I owed like $17,000 at that point. They're like "Perfect. You're covered up to twenty." So I didn't know that at the time. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

There was a $20,000 bonus and student loan repayment both as benefits to enlisting at

that time, in addition to education benefits such as the GI Bill.

Randolfo's military education included basic recruit training; Infantryman

training; and summer military mountaineer course. The infantryman training was not

evaluated by the American Council on Education so there are no credits recommended

for this training, but the other two training courses were recommended to count towards

general credits. Randolfo was not able to transfer any military credit to college credit

because he already had a Bachelor's Degree upon joining the Army and his Master's

program training is very specialized.

Randolfo's unit was deployed from 2008- 2009, with eleven months in-country in

Afghanistan.

> I was in country for like eleven. I was mobilized for like thirteen [months]. I served in the [Maidan] Wardak Province of Afghanistan south of Kabul. I also served a couple months in Kandahar. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

They participated in both a six-week mobilization before deploying and two-week

demobilization upon their return.   During the two-week demobilization process, they

were given classes on re-joining the civilian world, benefits, given medical and

psychological check-ups, and turned in all their gear. He describes the process as

> just kind of what we needed I guess. [But] I don't think it's ever really the same.
> I mean, they do the best they can, and I think what they gave us was perfect, but
> it's a little different once you get out in the real world. Then things are a little
> different. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

Upon returning from deployment, Randolfo had a difficult time. He describes the

difference as stemming from a different mentality. He was angry and resentful when he

returned, as he described it, because he went there (Afghanistan) to try to make a

difference and help people; but once his unit was there, most of his peers no longer

bought into that. After seeing how things were run during his first five weeks in-country,

Randolfo realized that he no longer quite knew what he was doing there but that he

wanted to get out alive and in one piece.

> When Randolfo was released from mobilization, he was angry for a long time.

He did not want to drive, he drank a lot of alcohol, and he slept most days until the

afternoon.

> I think when I got back I was pretty resentful and pretty angry about everything
> that happened because, I don't know. You go there with, I mean, with a mentality
> that "Hey, we're there to, you know, help people and make a difference." At least
> that's the mentality that I went there with. But, you know, like you get there, and
> then, you know, you join you're . . . (R. Cano, personal communication,
> November 9, 2012)

He described how he got out of this cycle: "Eventually I was at a loss and then I –this is

what kind of shook me out of it—eventually I realized 'Hey, you need to find what

makes you happy'" (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012). After doing

some soul-searching, Randolfo realized that he loved helping people and he asked himself where he would like to go to help others, as he felt he had to leave Illinois. Having visited Austin when he was in college, in addition to the fact that he was sent there for one summer for his job, and really liking central Texas, he decided to move to Austin to pursue his teaching certificate. "So I came here without really a plan. Came here and was like "well, I have my GI Bill, it would be a waste not to use it", so I said "okay" and started looking for schools" (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012).

After moving to Texas, Randolfo started attending Irondale State University in January 2011 to pursue a Master of Arts in Education with initial teacher certification. He declared that his degree is taking a little longer than expected because he worked full-time at one point during his enrollment at ISU.

> I had worked with nonprofit and with kids forever and sometimes you don't know right off the bat exactly what your purpose is in life. So it took me a little while to find what I wanted to do but eventually I realized that I love kids, I love making a difference, and I want to study education, so that's why I am here. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

He was unmarried but currently had a girlfriend he was seeing on a regular basis.

Randolfo had a record of success in college, having graduated from Augustana College with a 3.10 grade point average. In his time at Irondale State University, Randolfo had maintained a 3.75 grade point average. Randolfo had not received credit for any of his military experience toward his Master's Degree as he is infantry, which does not correlate with the teaching program. He was scheduled to graduate in May 2013. In October 2012, Randolfo re-enlisted in the Army National Guard and was now serving in a unit in Texas.

Participant 3: Alfred Long

Alfred Long was a thirty-six-year-old white male who grew up in what he described as a "family structure [that] was standard nuclear" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). His parents were still married and he had one younger brother. He also said that he has a large, supportive extended family that has been there since he was very young. "[T]he two children from my parents and a large, supportive extended family" (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012). Alfred's parents were both college educated. His mother had a Master's Degree and was a teacher. His father was a veteran who used his Hazlewood Exemption benefits to obtain five Bachelor's Degrees (before there was the 150 credit limit placed on it) and was currently completing his sixth degree.

When asked to describe his high school experience, Alfred shared that "I blinked and it was over" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). He was involved in a lot of extracurricular activities, including science competitions, powerlifting, cross-country, and one-act play, and enjoyed taking science courses.

> I did a lot of extracurricular activities. I learned quite a bit. I went through a lot of the sciences. I was there, but I was glad for it to be over with so I could get into college. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Alfred described himself as a terrible student who did not do homework. "I made it out of high school with about a 3.2-3.3 GPA without ever doing a lick of homework" (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012). He wanted high school to be over so he could attend college. When Alfred graduated high school in 1994, his parents wanted him to pursue a Bachelor's Degree. His first major was civil engineer, but after a year and a half, he switched majors to biology.

Alfred declared that he has always wanted to join the military, since he was young. He also felt a need to serve.

> I always wanted to join the military. I wanted to join the military straight out of high school. I have a need to serve, I enjoy weapons, and the one that really made me finally just decide I had had enough, was I was taking organic chemistry classes and… I am not necessarily an evil bastard but in the age before 9/11, there were enough chemical weapons scares and enough concerns. Especially after the 1995 Aum Shinrikyo cult attacked a Tokyo subway station and sent almost two thousand people to the hospital. I was studying organic chemistry and calculated with a budget of probably fifteen, twenty grand I could kill a hundred thousand people. That is frightening. That is not something that is pleasant to think about and so I wanted to become more involved with chemical weapons studies and the best place I thought to do that would be through Chemical Operations Specialty in the U.S. Army. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

After four years of college, Alfred quit in 1999 before graduating, and enlisted in the Army on February 4th, 1999. Even though education was not an inducement to serving in the Army, Alfred was familiar with education benefits and made sure that he got the Army College Fund in addition to the GI Bill when he enlisted. He enlisted from the state of Texas so he was currently eligible for the Hazlewood Exemption, although he had not had to use it yet and may transfer the benefit to one of his children.

Alfred's MOS was 54B/74D, Chemical Operations Specialist. When asked to describe this job, Alfred replied that it was stressful.

> Unfortunately, the way the Chemical Operations Specialty is set up in the Army is only that soldier that has been to NBC school has the training to make the determination on whether a given combat zone that may or may not have been contaminated with chemical or nuclear biological weapons is safe or not. We can calculate exposure times for soldiers in a radiation zone. We can calculate, you know, how long it may or may not be before you have to respond to anthrax or any other exposure. (personal communication, December 14, 2012)

His first deployment was to South Korea from 1999-2000. His unit was deployed to Kuwait from March 2003 to March 2004 to support Operation Iraqi Freedom, serving at Camp Arifjan, a logistics base. Alfred declares that though they were never fired at and

94

they never entered Iraq, they had to deal with heat and "people who had no clue what security really meant" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). Alfred got married while he was in the Army, four months before he deployed to Kuwait. "I was married while I was in the service, but the OIF deployment pretty much broke that marriage, and we did not have any children, thankfully" (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012). When he returned from his deployment to Kuwait, his wife was living with another person from a different unit, so they got divorced.

Alfred's military education included basic training; MOS training, Advanced Chemical Operations Specialty Training; Live Nerve Agent Training; Army Nuclear/Biological/Chemical Warfare Course; Obscurement and Cloaking; Army Driver Training (Wheeled & Tracked); Army Warrior Leadership Course; and Army Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Representative Course. Alfred described himself as a professional soldier who was "career military" (personal communication, December 14, 2012), whereas he expected to make a career out of his time.

Due to medical reasons, Alfred was discharged from active duty on October 8th, 2006, He joined the Army National Guard with disability claims with the VA. Alfred describes his disabilities:

> Bone shrapnel in one hip due to blows to the body; cartilage wearing out in the knees; permanent compression factors in the heel. . . . The reason I got out is because they were telling me that within five to ten years I would be looking at replacing both hips and both knees. And on top of that I have about 40% lung function loss. So my last year in the service they found out. It is manageable and treatable, but 40% lung function loss is significant. And so that was, my health was a career-ender. (personal communication, December 14, 2012)

When his disability claim with VA came in at 70% disability, he was separated from the National Guard in 2007.

Alfred did not provide very much information on the first college he attended

before joining the Army, except that he attended and wanted to join the military.

> I had already been in college about four years. I had originally started as a civil
> engineer; after about a year and a half, switched to biology and was already sort
> of in the field of toxicology at the time, so I was probably maybe a year from
> graduation. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Upon his discharge from the Army, however, Alfred used the Army College Fund and

Post-9/11 GI Bill to attend Brooklake University to complete his Bachelor of Science in

Environmental Sciences in 2008. "I did join from Texas, but at the time I still had plenty

left on my GI Bill. In fact, [when] I joined, I made sure I got the Army College Fund as

well as the GI Bill" (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012). Alfred was

also able to use education benefits to obtain his Master of Science in Biology from

Brooklake University in 2011. That was not his intention, as he reports that if he had

been able to find a job, he probably would not have finished his degree.

> Well, I will be honest, if I had not found a job that paid decently, I probably might
> have put off or just gone to evening classes or may not have even gone back to
> college. But because of the economy and not finding a job that I was comfortable
> with, going to college on the College Fund would do in the meantime and
> hopefully increase my odds of getting a job in that time. (A. Long, personal
> communication, December 14, 2012)

Alfred was currently within one semester of completing his teacher certification and

planned to continue teaching high school as of the time of the interview.

Participant 4: Eric Eastep

Eric Eastep was a twenty-seven-year-old white male who grew up in a nuclear

family with both parents. He had one sister and a half-brother that he describes as "not

really in the picture" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012). His

mother had a Master's Degree in Nursing Education and taught at a Community College.

His father was a veteran who became an engineer, and had an Associate's Degree in Art and General Studies. Eric's sister had a debilitative disease called chronic intestinal pseudo-obstruction, which caused her to live in pain and has required a great deal of medical care and expenses.

Eric described high school as "drugs, sex, and rock and roll, with a little bit of sports thrown in there" (personal communication, November 29, 2012). Eric participated in sports, theater, choir, and played guitar in a band. He shared that even though there he used a lot of drugs and alcohol, he still earned good grades.

> I did not go to class all the time. I showed up when I absolutely had to, but I was smart enough where I could just squeak on by and, you know, make good grades and keep everyone off my back. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Eric's parents wanted him to attend college when he was finished high school and he shared that he was offered a full ride scholarship for football. Eric did not like football that much and he felt that his parents could not afford his college along with his sister's medical complications, so he chose to join the Army to alleviate this and so he could help take care of his sister, if necessary.

> Medical bills piled up at my house and they put my sister through and I was good at football; I just did not enjoy it. And I was not the—I made good grades because I was smart—but I was more into partying and I just did not care. You know, education is wasted on the youth. And so I said "you know what, I am going to join the military." That way my parents do not have to worry about paying for my college, I can help my sister out if she needs it, and then I did my time and got out, did this. But yeah, essentially, it was not a lack of options but it was a lack of motivation to go after the options that were open. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Eric felt that he would end up in jail or dead if he went to college because he was not ready for it at that point in his life, so he joined the Army instead.

Eric enlisted in the U.S. Army on October 4, 2003 to become a Mental Health

worker. When asked how his parents responded to his joining the Army, Eric replied:

> My father, being from the military and being from a whole line, was okay with it. My mother was scared to death because this was, I actually signed my papers—I was in the delayed entry program—and so I signed my papers like four or five weeks before they announced the Afghan war. So it was like, my mother just freaked. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

He was very tentative in talking about his military experience and even shared that he

was hoping that the interview would be cancelled for some reason because he did not

want to talk about it. He shared that he was deployed but would not talk about it, except

to note that his current PTSD is from "over there" (personal communication, November

29, 2012). He also spent a great deal of time in a non-deploying unit that did research,

the unit from which he was discharged.

Eric's military education transcript was not available, but he shared that he

attended four different universities during his six years in the Army, for which Brooklake

University transferred in credit for core classes. He also revealed that his military

transcript helped him to get over fifty credit hours transferred to BU. His military

education consisted of basic training, MOS mental health training; hand-to-hand combat

training; drug and alcohol counseling; and on-the-job training in computer programming.

Eric described himself as having PTSD, "two bad knees, a bad back, and a messed up

heart" (personal communication, November 29, 2012). Due to these medical issues, Eric

was medically discharged on December 18, 2009.

A few weeks after his medical discharge, Eric started his first class at Brooklake

University.

> I left the Army on December 18th and I had already, because I knew I was getting out because of med board, I knew I was getting out so I had, I was already

accepted and applied, started back at school like January 9, 2010. So, I mean, there was almost no down time between. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Eric graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in English and Education from Brooklake University on December 15th, 2012, after completing his student teaching. His college transcript was not available as Eric chose not to respond to follow-up questions after the personal interview.

When asked if he had ever been married, Eric responded "I do not like small children, I do not ever want to get married, and I do not ever want to have children" (personal communication, November 29, 2012). When he made this statement, Eric did not sound malicious or mean, but was simply stating how he felt. Eric wanted to teach high school, however, because he wanted to share his love of English with students and he likes older kids.

Eric was a hesitant participant in this study; even though he contacted the researcher to participate in the interview because he wanted to help a fellow veteran, he explained how stressed he was about the whole thing.

> I have been dreading this for, ever since professor Parton (pseudonym) sent me the email because—to a point it was like, I am always willing to help a vet and I am sure it is something that you do too. It is that unspoken bond that we have, but whenever I read the thing, to a point it felt like, if I do not do this, this, in such a sense, I was about to start my student teaching, like I do not want this to affect my student teaching by not doing this. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Upon completion of the oral interview, Eric was not available for any more follow-up questions or additional information. He did not complete the written reflection and did not answer any emails or phone calls after the initial interview, although he did not ask to be removed as a participant in the study.

Cross-Case Analysis

The case study approach utilized for this study allowed the researcher to become immersed in the data as well as to get to know the participants well. Interviews were recorded and transcribed to be analyzed using cross-case synthesis, as outlined by Yin (2008), noting themes that emerged. Themes and cases that did not fit the emergent themes have been analyzed as well, with follow-up information sought in some cases to clarify issues. The researcher analyzed the data and conducted a cross-case analysis (Yin, 2008), developing themes that emerge from the multiple-case study, which are explained in detail. Cross-case analysis is essential in a multiple case study design (Creswell, 2007) and involves analyzing data across cases, searching out both similarities and contradictions (Merriam, 1998; Huberman & Miles, 1994). In order to triangulate the data, multiple sources were used in the form of documentation, interviews, reflections, and documents (Yin, 2008). Evidence for a code or theme was built from several sources (Creswell, 2007) and a rich, thick description of the findings is provided below (Merriam, 1998).

What follows is a description of why each participant chose to become a teacher, which acts as a powerful enabler to help overcome inhibitors that each of the participants have faced. Each of the participants had his own particular reasons for becoming a teacher, but there were some emergent themes that ran across each of the interviews during the cross-case analysis that are worth exploring more. Following that section is a cross-case analysis of the inhibitors OIF/OEF veterans faced trying to complete a teacher education program followed by enablers for each veteran.

Cross-Case Analysis: Why Become a Teacher

The desire to become a teacher was a notable enabler for veterans to overcome

inhibitors and continue on to obtain initial certification. In fact, the desire to teach must

be present for the student veteran to decide on a course of study in college, which makes

this desire an integral part of the study of student veterans as teachers. Therefore, the

research included the question "why do you want to become a teacher?" in the

questionnaire as an exploratory question. During the analysis of the data, it became clear

that each of the participants had a need to serve and wanted to make a difference for kids;

it is apparent that their military experience contributed to the desire to become a teacher.

The desire to work with young people and to value education coincides with prior

research on Troops to Teachers, but it applies to student veteran participants not in the

TTT program as well (Feistritzer, 2005; Nunnery et al., 2009; Owings et al., 2006;

Willett, 2002).

When asked why they wanted to teach, each participant answered in his own way.

Josh Delgado's main reason was because he wanted to work with kids and be a role

model. He declared "I just think that would be great [to] contribute to the education of

our kids" (personal communication, November 9, 2012) Josh's wife had her teacher

certification, and another reason he indicated for wanting to teach is to have summers off.

Randolfo had worked with kids for many years and has always been interested in

helping others. While growing up, Randolfo always craved guidance himself and wanted

to teach others so they do not have the same negative experience. He shared is reason for

teaching:

> sometimes you don't know right off the bat exactly what your purpose is in life,
> so it took me a while to find what I wanted but eventually I realized I love kids, I

love making a difference, and I want to study education, so that's why I am here. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012).

Randolfo continued, sharing his belief that teachers can sometimes change lives and that simply trying to have an impact on the world is the right path for him.

Alfred came from a family of teachers; his wife, his mother, uncle, and aunt were all teachers. In addition to teaching experience in the military, Alfred taught geology and biology lab courses while he was getting his Master's Degree at Brooklake University. He came upon teaching high school when he was finishing his Master's Degree in Biology after getting out of the military and he was looking for a job. His wife advised Alfred to apply for teaching positions "on a whim" (personal communication, December 14, 2012) until he found a job that he wanted. After applying to several jobs, he was hired on a Friday as a highly qualified teacher and started teaching the following Monday. According to Alfred, he would not have made it through his first year teaching without his wife. He had a love of learning and sought leadership in directing, guiding, and motivating others, which contributed to his desire to continue teaching. He was in his second year teaching and was in a probationary program to obtain his teaching certification at the time of the interview.

Eric began with a love of English as a subject and saw teaching as a way to get paid doing what he loves. He felt like he gave up on himself in school and did not like when teachers give up on students. He wanted to help students who others have already given up on and felt that he can do this because of his ability to get along well with both disenfranchised kids as well as smart ones. He wanted to feel like he is making a difference through teaching. "The intrinsic payoff is just amazing! I go home exhausted, but it is like way better than ever a PT session" (E. Eastep, personal communication,

November 29, 2012). In addition, Eric declared that he likes being the center of attention when giving people knowledge.

All four veterans indicated a desire to teach because of teaching experience gained while in the military. This finding is important because it seems that being a Non-Commissioned Officer in the military predisposes one to become a teacher, at least for this sample. This desire seems to enable the student veterans to continue on in college, despite inhibitors, toward the goal of becoming a classroom teacher.

Josh stated that teaching in the military made him feel that he could teach. Randolfo noted that his military experience was good because it gave him a chance to mentor others. Alfred had a great deal of teaching experience during his military service, as his MOS required him to train troops even as a private, E-1. He did a lot of teaching because he was assigned to the training room in addition to his duties as the Chemical Weapons Specialist for his unit. He was not afraid of being in front of large groups of people and declared that his experience teaching in areas considered hostile contributes to his comfort teaching high school. Eric's experience in the military contributed to his desire to teach in a large way. Eric shares "I found a love of teaching when I was in the military and that, really, it did come there. I have a love of teaching because I met a lot of disenfranchised people" (personal communication, November 29, 2012). While visiting with these fellow soldiers, Eric found that so many of them felt that teachers had given up on them, which fueled his desire to teach and be the teacher that does not give up. As a Non-Commissioned Officer, Eric was tasked with teaching several different topics to others in his unit, where he found that he really liked teaching people.

It is clear that military experience played a role in influencing each participant's desire to be a teacher. As stated earlier, the desire to be involved with young people and to make a difference is a strong motivator and enabler for a student veteran to become a teacher. Research shows that veterans see the value of education in society and have a desire to work with young people, which is closely related to their previous need to serve the country (Feistritzer, 2005; Willett, 2002). The desire to be a teacher is only one part of the process, however, and each participant was required to attend college to obtain the courses necessary for licensure as well as to prepare each person for the certification exam. There are also issues that have been identified that have served to inhibit the ability of the individual veteran to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification.

Cross-Case Analysis: Inhibitors

The following cross-case analysis of inhibitors addresses one part of the main research question of this study: What are the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas using education benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, after serving on active duty? In addition, the following research sub-question is also addressed: What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? Throughout the study, the operational definition of inhibitor is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that prevents or discourages the student veteran from completing the teacher education program and initial certification. Each of

the participants' data was included in this analysis in order to determine which inhibitors are most salient for each of them.

Inhibitor 1: Not Feeling Understood/No Peer Group/Lack of Support

Three themes emerged from the data that fit well together, as they all speak to a similar issue but from a different perspective. Participants reported not feeling understood, not having a peer group, and/or a lack of support as inhibitors to completing a teacher education program.

Not feeling understood. Each participant had feelings of not being understood during his time in the teacher education program. Eric notes the maturity difference between veterans and traditional students he experienced. He would get upset with traditional students at times and wanted them to grow up or he wanted to get in their face. It was once remarked to Eric that it must be nice to attend college for free, which really upset him.

> I had somebody at the, who is in the pedagogy department, make some quip like "Huh, it must be nice to go for free," and I was like "Yeah, it is nice now. Seven years, though, were terrible. Like I paid for it! I paid the blood price." And they are like "Oh, I guess if you look at it that way." And I was like "What other way is there to look at it!?" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Josh did not speak up much in class because his military experience made him different than the other students.

> I do not speak up as much in my government class, but, because of, you know, they bring up things from the Iraq War. You know, there was no weapons of mass destruction found. There was some of my experiences where there was stuff there. It just was not enough to make news. (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

105

He stated that he often wanted to speak up but chose to refrain because, although the topic or point might be important to him, it may not have been to others.

Randolfo and Alfred both indicated that family tried to be supportive, but, according to Alfred "none of them had been through the same situation. Most of their military service was Vietnam era and few, if any, used any VA benefits." (personal communication, December 14, 2012). He continued to describe how even family members who were veterans from another era did not understand his experience. Randolfo shared that his parents were supportive as well, but there were issues. "My mom and dad were there but they didn't, like, they didn't really understand, you know? Like it was just different" (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012). Both Alfred and Randolfo expressed that the military was a significant part of his identity, which made being understood even more difficult.

Veterans not feeling understood speaks to the main research question as well as research sub-questions 1 and 3. Research sub-question 1 asked: what are the barriers for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? Not feeling understood can be an inhibitor for a student veteran, both on campus as well as at home. If the veteran feels like he or she is not understood at college, it may lead to missing class and/or leaving college altogether. This could be the result of university policies (Cook & Kim, 2009; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009), student comments or perceived disrespect (Gwin et al., 2012), a maturity difference between traditional students and student veterans (DiRamio et al., 2008), or how the veteran feels he or she is treated by professors (Rumann & Hamrick, 2009). Cook and Kim (2009) reported that campus programs do not always match up with the needs or desires of

student veterans. Hollis (2009) insisted that there is a cultural barrier between military and higher education that must be overcome for veterans to be successful in college. If a veteran does not have support at home or does not feel understood by family, this can lead to a wide range of possible issues in completing college.

This theme addressed research sub-question 3 as well: How can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? Individuals in teacher education programs can make a concerted, conscious effort to get to know student veterans and to reach out to try to understand them, which would help veterans feel validated (Persky & Oliver, 2011). Even if the student veteran has different experiences, the fact that there are people in the program who want to understand them can help remove this inhibitor. In addition, Persky and Oliver (2011) recommended using outside resources, such as local mental health centers to help veterans as well as developing programs within the community college (i.e. Sociology, Psychology) to attend to veteran's issues.

No Peer Group. Josh Delgado and Alfred Long were the only two participants who indicated that lack of a peer group was an inhibitor to completing his teacher education program. Alfred asserted that Brooklake University is a commuter college and that "any involvement in anything outside of class is more limited, more hampered" (personal communication, December 14, 2012) because of this fact.

> While I was there I went ahead a founded a student veterans organization. There was not one at the time and I just, I wanted to know if other veterans were having difficulty readjusting to civilian life because my first semester back, I just, I had nobody to call and check up on me, there were no NCOs who were going to breathe down my neck and say "Why were you late?" It was a bit of a

107

readjustment. And after that first semester, I said "Alright, to hell with this. I cannot do this alone. I am going to find other veterans and we are going to work it out together." So I founded the student veterans organization, found out later there was a national one that started up at almost the same time. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Alfred reported, however, that the main problem was getting more than ten to twelve student veterans to show up to each meeting. This indicated that even though a student veteran organization may be available, there is difficulty in getting veterans to partake in such activities while they are in college.

Josh has wanted to get together with other veterans since coming to Irondale State University. He was always surrounded by about sixty guys in the Army but now he just went to class and then goes home. Josh found a Facebook group for a student veteran's organization but the latest post was over a year old and the page was not maintained, so he stopped looking. In addition, Josh indicated that ISU has a big campus and that there were not many people on campus in his age group, which is 25-45 years old. He observed that the student veterans on campus are usually much younger than he is and that there is no hangout specifically for veterans, although there are special places for other groups. When he sought a peer group at the local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), Josh found that veterans there are much older than him.

> I guess the only thing that I would like to see more of is, I guess more social interaction. Like especially after, I am kind of in between, you know. I have stopped at the VFW, because I ride a bike too, so. Most of those guys are—I thought I was old—most of those guys are a lot older! So, you know, 30s and 40s age group, you know, veterans, I have not seen a whole lot . . . I had gotten a little, the little paper that said about that, that veteran's group that was supposed to be here at [Irondale] State. That is the ones that I had emailed and did not hear anything back, but I have not been back in to talk to them. (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

Josh spent some time sharing this experience and declared that being socially involved, whether at school or work, was important to him and played a role in his feelings.

In any military branch, servicemembers are nearly constantly surrounded by peers. For some veterans, not having a peer group upon discharge is not a problem. The fact that only two of the participants report this as an issue is indicative of this. For others, however, it was significant and can have far-reaching effects on student veterans in college, such as making veterans leave in the first semester (ACE, 2008; DiRamio et al., 2008; Gwin et al., 2012; Murphy, 2011). This speaks to research sub-question 1: What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? If a peer group cannot be found for the veteran while in college, he or she may be more likely to leave and get a job where a peer group can be more easily found (Steele et al., 2010). Rumann and Hamrick (2010) insisted that student veterans reported difficulty making friends and establishing relationships and were wary as to whom to tell of their veteran status. The two participants who reported this as an inhibitor were the only two with families. The two single student veterans did not report lack of peer group as an inhibitor.

Lack of Support. Alfred and Eric, both students at Brooklake University, shared a lack of support as an inhibiting factor. Alfred's feelings stemmed largely from his military experience, while Eric's came from a lack of family support. Alfred insists that his unit, when deployed to Kuwait, was not combat-ready but were assigned to guard a compound in Kuwait anyway. "Our commander fought tooth and nail to keep us out of combat. She found any job she could, and it was a mixed-gender unit that was incapable of performing well" (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012). While

109

deployed, Alfred alleged that no personnel were doing functions checks on weapons to ensure that they will fire when needed, and that "I went to the commander after I had rotated through every position and noted that about 70% of the weapons were offline" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). One round of ammunition was lost by someone on guard duty, and as a result, ammunition was taken away from everyone assigned to protect the compound. With so many non-functioning weapons, Alfred took it upon himself to become the unofficial armorer and make sure that they had working weapons. This resulted in sleep deprivation and a feeling that nobody was watching his back, resulting in his feeling totally alone over there. Alfred expresses his feelings on his unit:

> Coming out of that, you know, everyone has their own horror stories about what they faced while in, but because my horror stories were not from an enemy, but from my own people, I think that drastically affected how I approach my unit. (personal communication, December 14, 2012)

This feeling has carried over into Alfred's professional life, as he does not trust his administration at school and feels he has to double-check everything.

> So when I look at my administration as a teacher, I cannot trust them to do anything. I have to go back and double check. I have to find someone who knows about this or that system. I have to be my own armorer again, and I think it is helping. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Alfred also revealed that he had no church help with his transition and problems because he is spiritual, but not religious, so he does not attend church.

Eric felt that there is great support for military in the area, but little to no support for veterans, which is infuriating for him. Eric explained that "it is weird being in such a conservative area, you know, support your troops things is all over and it is like, 'Yeah, we support the troops but not vets. Screw you.' And little things like that" (personal

communication, November 29, 2012). Eric's family has lacked in supporting him in becoming a teacher as well, Eric revealed, as his dad wanted him to go into Information Technology, his mom wanted him to go into the medical field, and he and his sister had a serious falling out where they did not even talk to each other. "So, I mean, from the start, almost zero support. Even the semester before my student teaching, my father reminded me that it was not too late to go into IT" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012).

These feelings of not being supported can inhibit veterans from continuing on in a teacher education program, instead seeking somewhere else where they are supported or quitting college altogether. This addressed research sub-question 5: Why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not? As indicated by the descriptions above, however, this feeling of lack of support can stem from military experience, family, or society in general. If a veteran feels alienated or lacks support in some way, he or she may choose to leave a teacher education program or not even attempt to complete one in the first place. It is important for student veterans to feel supported in many ways upon their matriculation to college (Steele et al., 2010), which is something that teacher education programs can do to help remove inhibitors for veterans to complete a teacher education program, as asked in research sub-question 3.

Inhibitor 2: Mental Health Issues/Health Issues

Mental health and health issues are related themes that both influence the propensity for a student veteran to complete a teacher program by acting as an inhibitor.

111

Mental health issues and health issues affect student veterans in different ways, but each one has a significant impact on individual participants.

Mental Health Issues. Josh Delgado did not report any issues with his mental health and he seems to be a balanced person, although this cannot be confirmed. Randolfo Cano, Alfred Long, and Eric Eastep, on the other hand, each reported issues with mental health upon discharge from the military or return from deployment. Issues reported range from feeling like being in a mental fog to having a diagnosed case of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Randolfo maintained that when he returned from his deployment he felt lost and angry, which made the transition more difficult. "I was really, really angry and upset at everything for probably six or seven months. I drank a lot of beer, kind of the typical thing you hear about" (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012).   This resulted in him not wanting to drive, instead choosing to catch rides with friends or family. In addition, Randolfo shared that he drank a lot of alcohol during this time and would stay up until about 4am and sleep all day. A large part of the issues, he maintains, is that different things matter when you are in a war zone, but you are going to be angry when people start getting hurt or killed.

> I think it's just the way people direct their anger. Just depending on—everyone's experience it a little differently—but at the end of the day, everyone's angry. You know, and it's not good. It doesn't matter if it's at your peers, at the government, at the military, or what happened, who the hell forgot the radio. Like, whatever happens, yeah, everyone's going to be upset when, you know, you start, people start getting hurt, or dying. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

He believed that many in his unit have moral qualms about what was right after being in a warzone, although he had been able to rationalize this and it did not affect him.

112

Randolfo remarked that counseling has a stigma attached to it and that he did not seek

any counseling.

Alfred Long stressed that once he was discharged, he felt like he was in a mental

haze the whole time he was in the military.

> I want to say, looking back on it, I can say that living in the military, I lived in a
> fog, mentally. There is a level… Have you ever had a carb overload where you
> just pig out on too many carbs and your thinking is so slowed down? It is like
> trying to think through a fog. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14,
> 2012)

Alfred's military occupational specialty required him to be able to calculate how many

soldiers would die as the result of an exposure to a specific chemical weapon, which he

feels was sad. Alfred perceived the military as taking away the self-sufficiency of the

individual. He explained that there is always someone above you looking out for you,

backing you up, or taking care of you, which results in complacency. This does not exist

in the real world, Alfred alleged, "and so, in some ways, we set our soldiers up for failure

when we make that transition to the real world" (personal interview, December 14, 2012).

Alfred sought mental health counseling about six months after his discharge. He went to

the VA and was sent to a state-funded psychologist, whom he saw every other week for

four months. The counselor recommended that Alfred read a book that had no

application to his situation, although he tried to find it. He was also critical of such

counselors because, in his words "they are not equipped to handle this kind of situation"

(A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012).   Alfred quit seeing the

counselor after four months.

Eric Eastep proclaimed that he had a diagnosis of PTSD from the VA, which caused him to raise his voice at people, even though he was trying to speak to civilians in a different way.

> Controlling that instant, like "you are doing this wrong!" And raising my voice at people. Dealing with, dealing with a whole new set of having to speak to people. You know, because I did not get to go through the whole year-long process of getting out where, you know, they talk about reintegration into society. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Eric did not like people behind him at any point, which made his college attendance more difficult, as well as his student teaching, as the room in which he did his student teaching had to be completely reorganized to accommodate his PTSD. Eric had to sit in the back of classrooms with his back to the wall, could not be in labs where there were loud noises, and did not travel very often because of his PTSD. Eric explained when our interview was complete that he was terrified of talking to me because he imagined the worst scenario and did not want to talk about his military experience at all. Eric affirmed another inhibitor when he described the mental exhaustion he felt while completing his teacher education program. When asked about other inhibitors, Eric stated:

> Exhaustion. There was a point where, because you know, for three straight years I basically did not have a day off. I did not have any time off because, you know, even over my breaks, you are prepping. So if you know you are going to be taking an Advanced Romanticism course, you find out what all the books are, and you have twelve books and you are like "oh, I am going to start reading." And so I really just, I got burned out, you know, and I was hoping that I would have every now and then a couple days off. (personal communication, November 29, 2012)

In line with the stress of the heavy load was the fact that the required courses for Eric's degree entailed a great deal of reading, and with him attending full-time every summer, there was little time to relax.

When discussing inhibitors for student veterans to complete a teacher education program, mental health was an important consideration that speaks to the main research question and research sub-question 1: What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? In order to be able to attend classes regularly and to participate in them effectively, a student veteran must be mentally balanced (Selber et al., 2011). Veterans do not seek help for mental health issues very often (Bauman, 2009), however, so making help readily available and accessible in a safe, non-threatening manner is essential (Persky & Oliver, 2011). This is significant because every OIF/OEF-era veteran will have experience in a war zone that may cause mental health problems (Bauman). Research sub-question 3 asked: how can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? Our colleges and universities owe it to our veterans to help them be successful and reach their goals by attending college and becoming teachers, so we must do all we can to help alleviate the problems that mental health issues can cause for student veterans. Teacher education programs can address this issue by providing training to faculty and staff on mental health issues, for both veterans and non-veterans, and to direct individuals who may need help to services (Selber et al., 2011).

Health Issues. Health was only an inhibitor for Alfred Long and Eric Eastep, both in the teacher education program BU. Although Josh Delgado was still awaiting his disability claim with the VA, he did not report having any enduring medical issues from his 28-plus years of service. On the other hand, Alfred Long stated that his health was a career ender. When asked the severity of his health problems, Alfred replied that he had

115

"significant injury issues. I am rated at 70% disability. [I have] bone shrapnel in one hip due to blows to the body; cartilage wearing out in the knees; permanent compression factors in the heel" (personal communication, December 14, 2012), as well as 40% lung function loss. Alfred stressed that physical rehabilitation was an adjustment because he was not able to work out normally, which was an outlet for him. Alfred shared that his

> disabilities in some ways forced me to consider that I was helpless… it was a forced helplessness. I could not workout. I did not know the limits of my ability to workout but I needed to workout. Physical exercise was just the only thing that would keep me sane. (personal communication, December 14, 2012)

As a result, Alfred had to find new ways to work out, which included low-intensity workouts such as swimming; and although he proclaimed that it was not the same, it was much better than previously.

Eric Eastep also maintained that health issues were the cause of his medical discharge from the Army. He did not talk much about his health except to share that he has two bad knees, a bad back, and a "messed up heart" (personal communication, November 29, 2012). He did not share what percentage of disability he had with the VA, except that it was under appeal because he felt it was way too low for the injuries he was still contending with on a daily basis. It is worth noting that Eric was able to walk and move around well, walking without a limp and not using any type of device to aid him in being mobile.

There was less information for this theme, but the severity of the issues that each participant reports warrants a stand-alone topic that speaks to the main research question and research sub-question 1: What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? There are countless OIF/OEF-era veterans with severe physical disabilities being discharged from

116

the military and these can act as strong inhibitors for attending college at all (ACE, 2009; Bauman, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008; Hollis, 2009; Selber et al., 2011). Even though these veterans may be facing several health issues, they can still contribute to society and become teachers, so it is essential that universities and education programs work to help alleviate any inhibiting influence health issues can have on a veteran.

Inhibitor 3: Family Issues

All four participants reported family issues that have acted as inhibitors to completing the teacher education program and obtaining initial certification. These range from simply having small children in the house making attending class more difficult to a lack of support in the career path the veteran has chosen to pursue. Family can either be an enabler or inhibitor, depending on the specific relationship and other variables involved. Therefore, it was deemed essential to consider family issues when asking about inhibitors for completing a teacher education program.

Josh Delgado (ISU) and Alfred Long (BU) were the only two participants that were married with children in the house. Josh had two children who were in elementary school, but he did not list having children as in inhibitor. He was responsible for picking them up from school, however, so that influenced which classes he took and resulted in him taking more day classes. "I go to school while my boys are in school so I am trying to be home when they get out of school" (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012). There were more non-traditional students in night classes, but Josh took the traditional day courses so he could be home, which can act as an inhibitor in some instances if the only class available is a night course.

Alfred Long was both married and divorced in the Army, but had no children

from that marriage. He was re-married while he was completing his Master's Degree and

had two step-children, one elementary-age and the other a young teenager. In addition,

he and his wife had a seven-month-old that, he remarked, had made attending school

more difficult, although he would not trade her for the world.

> Believe me, there are some Ph.D. programs my wife and I are looking at . . .
> Most of the Ph.D. programs that are available around here are going to require
> considerable commutes . . . So with a seven-month-old I do not see that
> happening anytime soon. But maybe when this little bit is older, who knows? (A.
> Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

So while he was very satisfied and happy with his family situation, the young children in

his household acted as an inhibitor for Alfred to continue his education and use all of his

education benefits.

Randolfo Cano maintained that other responsibilities and commitments, as he

describes them, can be great inhibitors for completing a program in college. These other

responsibilities and commitments possibly included a wife and kids, sick family

members, and a job.

> And you have other commitments, I think that may have a toll on other people.
> Like you have other commitments, you know, whether you have kids, you have a
> wife. You know, a sick brother or sister, parents. (R. Cano, personal
> communication, November 9, 2012)

Since Randolfo reported having a girlfriend and no children, it seemed likely that he has

dealt with sick family members during his time in the teacher education program,

although he did not mention any specific occasion.

Eric Eastep testified that his family was not supportive of him becoming a teacher

at all. His father wanted him to go into the Information Technology (IT) field, even

going so far as to tell Eric that he was wasting a gift by going into education.

I decided on what I was going to do, I was going to get my degree in English, and I called my father. I said "hey dad, I am going to, I decided on a major." He goes "oh, that is awesome," and he knew I was going to say IT . . . And he is like "he is going to say IT, he is going to say IT!" I said "I am going to get my degree in English," and he goes "huh, here is your mom." And my mom gets on the phone, "hey Rob, what is going on? Your dad kind of looks upset." I said "yeah, I told him I declared my degree." She goes "oh, awesome!" and she, along with her side of the family, was in the medical branch. She is thinking "oh, he decided to go for something medical." I said "so I decided to get my degree in English." She goes "oh, that is nice. We will just see how that goes." (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Lack of support from his parents added to Eric's difficulty in maintaining his presence in the teacher education program. Eric remarked that he had a falling out with his sister that was very ugly, resulting in him not even being invited to her wedding, which added to his stress. "So, I mean, from the start, almost zero support. Even the semester before my student teaching, my father reminded me that it was not too late to go into IT" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012).

Family issues can be strong inhibitors for student veterans in a teacher education program. Research sub-question 1 asked: what are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? Family can be an enabling factor or inhibitor for a student veteran trying to complete a teacher education program, depending on the relationship (ACE 2008). Inhibitors caused by having family responsibilities can include the presence of young children and how to best care for them, scheduling with small children, and lack of support or an inability to support a student veteran in college (ACE, 2008; Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2005). Any one of these issues can be enough to make a student veteran quit a teacher education program or not enroll in the first place. While these issues may not be present for every veteran or are vary in their intensity, they are relevant considerations for

119

any married student veteran (ACE, 2009; Taniguchi & Kaufman, 2005). The fact that U.S. military members have higher marriage rates than non-military counterparts, as well as higher divorce rates, is reported by Hogan and Seifert (2010). In 2007-2008, 45% of military undergraduates were married and 47% were raising children (ACE, 2009). Obtaining a college education is undoubtedly a boost for a veteran with a family, allowing the veteran to better support and provide for a spouse and/or children, but the same family can be an inhibiting factor at the same time.

Research sub-question 3 asked: how can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? Teacher education programs often have flexible scheduling already for graduate programs, but programs can help aid veterans with families by offering a wide range of class times and options for veterans to take for undergraduate credit. Being supportive of those with a family is also helpful, such as offering direction to counseling services or other areas of the university that may be able to help a veteran with children, such as child care (DiRamio et al., 2008; Gwin et al., 2012; Murphy, 2011; Selber et al., 2011).

Inhibitor 4: Difficult Transition

All four participants indicated a difficult transition from the military as an inhibitor to completing his teacher education program. Josh Delgado observed that the VA sent all of his paperwork to the wrong district office, which resulted in the paperwork taking several weeks to get sent to the correct office, his doctor's appointments being cancelled; his benefits could not be disbursed, according to the VA, until his paperwork situation was rectified, causing a delay.

120

My, I guess my only holdup is I thought, you know applying for benefits, let's see, classes started August 27th. I started to apply for my benefits in the end of May, the first of June. Thinking, you know, June, July, and August was enough time. It was a, you know, it seemed like it was a crunch, waiting for the return, waiting for up where you are at, up there in Waco, waiting for an answer from them. Seemed like taking forever, and I had to get on the phone and when you call you actually set up an appointment for them to call you back. You never get somebody on the phone when you call. (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

Josh also felt that there should be a separate discharge for retiring personnel versus those

veterans getting out after an enlistment because they were in different phases of life and

had different needs.

Randolfo Cano re-enlisted in 2012 but emphasized the difficulty he had

transitioning back to his civilian status upon returning from his deployment.

I was angry for a long time. When I came back I was probably, I didn't even want to drive. I didn't like driving. For a long time I had my brother and sister drive me around, pretty much everywhere. I was really, really angry and upset at everything for probably six or seven months. I drank a lot of beer, kind of the typical thing you hear about. Stayed up until, I would go to bed at like four in the morning and I'd just sleep until like 2 in the afternoon and then do it all over again. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

It was only after he made the decision to move to Texas and attend ISU for teacher

education that Randolfo was able to get his life back on track.

But eventually, you know, I was at a loss and then I—this is kind of what shook me out of it—eventually I realized "Hey, you need to find what makes you happy." Well what makes me happy, I figured, helping others. That's what makes me happy. So "Okay, that's what you have to do. You have to help others. Okay. Where would you like to go to help others?" because I had to leave Illinois. I said "Texas, Austin. As close to Austin as I want to get." That's what I liked when I was a sophomore in college. Before I even joined the military I like that place. "That's where I want to go, I want to go there and help others." So eventually I did a summer camp in Killeen for the C5U Foundation and I went through that one summer. I ended up working for them two summers, but that summer kind of brought me back to reality and you realize what's important and then I was like "Oh, this is what I want to do. I'm going to move to Austin and start going to school. I'm going to move down here and start going to school." Well, I didn't know I was going to go to school. I said I want to help others I'll

move down here and help others. I got here, I want to help others, and then I eventually kind of fell into coming to [Irondale] State and getting my Master's and my certification in education. So, I mean, my transition part was probably, it was pretty hard, because you just, I don't know. I'm very positive but when I come back and you see a lot of the stuff over there, you're just like "Man, this is almost a waste of time." Let alone a waste of human life. Like, it's hard. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

In addition, Randolfo testified that his peers in his unit were essential for him to get out of the rut he was in following his deployment.

Alfred Long had an extremely difficult time transitioning, as he maintained that he was both institutionalized as a career military person and that his health ending his career added to the depth of difficulty he faced. As a result of his injuries and disabilities, Alfred was not able to work out regularly when he was discharged, which was an outlet for him. He had a 70% disability rating with the VA which required some physical rehabilitation and made the transition to the civilian world difficult. Alfred declared that he was career military and that he allowed himself to become institutionalized. He was depressed when readjusting to civilian life, in part because of his health issues, and in part because he no longer knew who is going to be taking care of him when he got out.

> And so the other factor there to letting us transition is a self-sufficiency that I think the military sometimes takes away. When you know you have an NCO who will get on your ass for being late to a class, when you know somebody is there to watch over you, or back you up, or take care of you, you get complacent and that institutional complacency is… It does not exist out here in the civilian world. And so, in some ways, we set our soldiers up for failure when we make that transition to the civilian world. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Alfred also mentioned that the training on college benefits was not helpful to him when he was getting out because he had no experience to put the training into context with, so it did not serve him well.

Eric Eastep was medically discharged near the middle of December, went home, and was attending college full-time three weeks later. As a result of his swift medical discharge, Eric was not availed of the training the nearly all veterans receive before re-entering the civilian world. "I started getting out of the Army, so I had basically two weeks to get everything set up" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012). In the three weeks' notice he received before his discharge and starting college, he had to fly home, get all VA paperwork completed, go through all of his stuff at home, meet people at the college, figure out where to buy books, and then purchase the books before his benefits arrived. In addition, Eric cited money issues as another inhibitor during the transition. "I left the military with, just like most people did, with a bunch of debt" and have to work while attending college full time (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012). He felt underutilized at his entry-level job at Best Buy, not using the skills he had acquired in the military, but he was forced to work there if he wanted to continue attending college full time.

This section addressed the main research question as well as research sub-question 1: what are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? The transition from military to civilian is a difficult transition for many veterans (ACE, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008; Hollis, 2009). When adding an additional transition to college, it can be an ever greater inhibitor to staying enrolled and completing a teacher education program. Transition difficulties can range from having a lot of debt to feeling institutionalized and having trouble interacting on a college campus (ACE, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008; Hollis, 2009). In addition, if veterans were dealing with mental health issues, as shared above,

the transition difficulties can be compounded (ACE, 2009; Bauman, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008; Hollis, 2009; Rumann & Hamrick, 2010). Transition difficulties were related to research sub-question 3 as well: How can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? Teacher education programs can work to ensure veterans have an adequate transition by offering a veteran-specific orientation, if there are enough veterans enrolled, which is proven to be a terrific way to help overcome the inhibiting factor of a difficult transition (ACE, 2008; DiRamio et al., 2008; Gwin et al., 2012; Persky & Oliver, 2011).

Inhibitor 5: Education Benefits Issues/Credit Transfer Issues/ VA Office at the University

Three themes fit well together in a group because they represent inhibitors that were outside the locus of control or influence for veterans. Education benefits are administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, credit transfer policies are determined at individual colleges and universities, and the VA office at the university is also under the control of individual universities.

Education Benefits Issues. Josh Delgado (ISU), Randolfo Cano (ISU), and Eric Eastep (BU) each expressed issues with education benefits that were inhibiting during his time in the teacher education program. Alfred Long shared that he had to re-learn some of the steps to get enrolled and get financial aid, but felt that they are a part of the normal learning curve rather than an inhibitor.

Josh Delgado did not know he could apply for financial aid in addition to his GI Bill benefit. Josh's wife encouraged him to complete his Free Application for Federal

Student Aid and Josh wound up receiving a two thousand dollar Pell Grant for his work.

Josh reported, "I did not know that I was eligible for a Pell Grant" (personal

communication, November 9, 2012). Josh also describes not using the Troops to

Teachers Program, for which he was qualified and which would have resulted in more

money, because the process was too long and confusing and he was simply unsure of his

standing. "That process is kind of, I guess, I do not know everything about it that I guess

I need to know" (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

When asked about inhibitors to completing the teacher education program,

Randolfo Cano replied:

> I just, kind of learning about your benefits. A discouraging factor. Sometimes knowing the forms to fill out or all the steps, I think sometimes is discouraging. Especially when you're coming in cold, you know, you don't know a whole lot about it. I mean, after you run through it once or twice, then everything is second nature. But, I mean, you do definitely do make a lot of mistakes figuring out your benefits at first. Not knowing who to email, who's your contact person at your school, who's your contact person at the state. Sometimes they give you the runaround and you've got to find them, but once you have their email, you have them! (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

He mentioned that he made a lot of mistakes the first time he was figuring out his

benefits, which can act as an inhibitor to both motivation and ability to keep registration

in the program up-to-date. In line with ACE (2008, 2009), Randolfo reported that when

the GI Bill changed from Montgomery to Post-9/11, there was a lot of confusion.

Figuring out the process for getting GI Bill and other Army education funding was

difficult and required Randolfo to talk to a lot of people before he could complete the

requirements.

Eric Eastep asserted that the breaks in funding and changes were two looming

inhibitors that gave him terrible difficulties in his program.

Yeah, fall semester and spring semester. So it is bound to happen. That is a month. That is an entire month you do not get paid. Now they say they support you in every way as long as you are going to class, well I am not taking a voluntary break. You are making me stop because you are do not pay for mini-sessions! I would go to a mini-session if it meant I would continue to get paid. Also, like they kept changing the amount that you would have to take over the summer. So one summer it was like you just have to take twelve total hours, or nine total hours. Then one, I was just like "okay. I am just going to take summer I. I will take nine hours in summer I and lax in summer II." And they changed it, you have to have four and four. And I was like "there is no such thing as a four hour class! You are saying I have to take a six!" So then, because all the classes I wanted were in summer I, it was like in summer II, I just had to take two random classes that I did not care about, but at the same time I was like "Oh, I have to keep my grades up, so ooooh," study a lot. And you know, taking upper-level literature classes, every one of those is intense research papers. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Eric also remarked that the book stipend had changed during his time in the teacher education program and that the cap on the amount made it impossible for him to cover all of his required books. Eric insisted "by the end of my fall semester I have used almost all of my thousand dollars book money" (personal communication, November 29, 2012). He had to work or get a student loan to pay for the rest of his required books himself.

Difficulties with education benefits were a large inhibitor for veterans, for if the funding is not available for whatever reason, is delayed, or runs out, the student veteran may be forced to either quit school or leave class (Gwin et al., 2012). Even though the GI Bill benefits are useful and provide a wonderful enabler for attending college, problems in the administration and/or distribution of the funds have a far-reaching effect on all student veterans across the nation (Cook & Kim, 2009; Steele et al., 2010). Each of the veterans above shared difficulties with education benefits that caused problems for them but did not result in them quitting the program, although it is nearly impossible to guess the number of veterans who have foregone attending college because of issues similar to these. This theme attends to research sub-question 5: why are some veterans

able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not? It is possible that numerous veterans find the difficulties in registering for college, getting classes and financial aid set up, dealing with the VA to get the GI Bill, and attending class too much of an inhibitor to enrolling in college in the first place (Cook & Kim; Gwin et al, 2012.; Steele et al., 2011). In addition, this may be the one inhibitor that has a large influence on other inhibitors and ultimately may result in the veteran leaving a teacher education program.

Credit Transfer Difficulties. Josh Delgado (ISU) and Eric Eastep (BU) each expressed having issues with transferring credits when enrolling in his current teacher education program. Getting credits transferred was not an issue for Randolfo Cano because he started his program with a Bachelor's Degree. Josh Delgado was pursuing a teacher certification in Auto Mechanics, for which he had over 28 years' experience in the military.

> So I am maxed out and I still have to put together this portfolio. And it is a degree requirement to take this course, and I am like, it is an interesting course, but I also feel like you have got all my credits that I am ever going to get through my work experience. (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

After spending 28 years doing the job and having the maximum number of allowable credits, Josh reported feeling "like I am spinning my wheels" (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012). In addition, Josh declared that he has had trouble dealing with getting credits for experience and training he obtained while in the military.

> But moving around—I think that was the biggest thing—moving around and whatever degree plan you have, going from college to college, you are almost starting from scratch again. Even coming here I had to—they took a lot of my credits that I had—I have been to seven other colleges. There was a few classes that they would not take. You know, core classes. So I had to go and get the syllabuses, do all the homework, and go and confront them; said "Look, you guys

127

gave me college credit but you are not giving it to me towards core." And I think for anybody, as far as military, that is one of the toughest things, is when you are bouncing around from college to college and nobody is taking all your classes. Especially your core classes. (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

Only after Josh did this were some of his credits accepted by ISU, allowing him to graduate sooner than he would have if he had not done all that work himself.

Eric Eastep remarked that he had nearly 200 credits at the time of the interview, close to graduation, because of his Army transfer credits. This posed a problem for him when registering for classes, however, as the majority of his transfer credits were allotted to elective spots in his degree plan, making registering for enough credits each semester difficult. Army transfer credits did not apply to major courses, however, and Eric insisted that he was angry about this because he felt he has had to re-take courses he had already learned while on active duty. Finally, Eric expressed frustration at not being able to have all of his military training transfer to the civilian side. As an example, Eric shared that he had a military license to drive numerous large vehicles while in the Army, but in order to get his Commercial Driver's License (CDL) in the civilian world, he was required to take all the tests again. This was an inhibitor for Eric because he felt that with a CDL, driving truck "is something I could have done while I was in college and made pretty good money" (personal communication, November 29, 2012), and his military training did not count for anything once he was out.

Credit transfer issues, while they may not be a sole reason for leaving a teacher education program, can certainly combine with other inhibitors to reach the critical mass of inhibitors for a student veteran to leave a program or not even start college (Gwin et al., 2012). It is frustrating to work very hard in the military, attend training, and to be

128

told all along that credits will transfer to some type of college credit upon discharge only to be told that they will not transfer or to have difficulty in doing so (ACE, 2008; Murphy, 2011; Persky & Oliver, 2011; Steele et al., 2010; Williams & Pankowski, 1992). Research sub-question 4 asks: how can teacher education programs support the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? Teacher education programs can work closely with the registrar and university administrators to ensure that there is a credit transfer policy that is fair and reasonable for both the university as well as the veteran (Selber et al., 2011).

Veterans Affairs Office at the University. Alfred Long and Eric Eastep, both attending BU, indicated dissatisfaction with the Veterans Affairs office at Brooklake University. Alfred's major complaint was that there were no veterans working at the VA office at the university, which can lead to misunderstandings and less connection with veterans. Alfred shares that when he was attending BU, "they did not have any veterans actually working in the VA office nor were there any veteran contacts at the school" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). Alfred described this as an inhibitor because he would have preferred to have a point of contact to help familiarize him with the university.

Eric, however, contended that there were a host of issues with the VA office at BU. The first semester Eric was attending BU, the VA office at the university lost his paperwork, resulting in frustration at getting paid later and even getting dropped from one class. Eric also expressed frustration with having to rearrange his degree plan each semester in order to secure funding under the Post-9/11 GI Bill:

129

The VA is broken like all get-out at [Brooklake]. I do not know how it is anywhere else, but it is—they lose paperwork, they, so several semesters—and getting them to approve things, you know, required me to go back and forth between places and having them keep re-writing my degree plan because they are like "oh, you are required to take this many classes. That class is not on your degree plan so you cannot take it," but there is nothing else I can take. I need to still get paid, so you are just making me waste your money but you are not letting me, so I am having to waste somebody's time. (personal communication, November 29, 2012)

The VA office at BU did not communicate very regularly or consistently with student veterans either, according to Eric, as he shared that he would go into the office with the forms completed and at that point be told of changes that had occurred in requirements. He alleged that he never received emails or other forms of communication from the VA office and they never remembered who he was when he came in, which was frustrating.

No communication. You show up at their office and that is when they tell you that you are wrong. And it changed. I had to get four different people to write me letters saying that student teaching, that I was, it was full time. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

That is not all, though, as Eric declared that it was hard to get the VA office at BU on the phone or to answer emails, which often resulted in him physically going to the office to contact them. "When you call up, they are like 'Oh, we are super-busy. Oh, we will have to get back to you.' And you leave a name, you leave a number, you leave emails, and so nothing" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)! Eric even felt that the people working in the office talked down to him at times and they were less than helpful, refusing to allow him to make a copy of a form the VA office needed when they had a copy machine directly behind the counter.

In response to the main research question and research sub-question 1, both of the participants who reported the VA office at the university as an inhibitor attend Brooklake University. This supports Bauman's (2009) assertion that VA offices at universities are

130

not useful at all. Contradictory to this finding, the two participants from Irondale State University both maintained that the VA office at the university was a wonderful enabler and that they would not have been able to continue in the program without the office. Murphy (2011) insisted that the veteran's representative at the VA office at the university was a key individual to help meet veteran's needs. Rumann and Hamrick (2009) maintained that there were great inconsistencies across the nation in terms of services provided by colleges and universities for student veterans. These findings indicated that the VA office at the university can be a key inhibitor or enabler, depending on how it is organized and how responsive or helpful the office is to student veterans (Bauman; Murphy; Rumann & Hamrick). This is a university issue, however, as there is not a specific VA office for each education program.

Inhibitor 6: Department of Veterans Affairs Issues

Josh Delgado and Eric Eastep emphasized issues with the Department of Veterans Affairs as an inhibitor. Josh attended ISU and noted that the VA backlog was frustrating, as he nearly always had to leave a message and was not able to speak with a person; it took a long time to get his eligibility certificate, which only happened after several phone calls. He did not get his housing allowance from the Post-9/11 GI Bill for the first few months of his attendance because the VA had him still listed as being in the Army and not as retired. When asked if he was okay with leaving messages, Josh replied "Sure that frustrates…(laughs). I would much rather talk to somebody when I have the time to talk to them if they are there, but the whole VA seems like that now. They are really backlogged" (personal communication, November 9, 2012).

Eric is emphatic when he declared that the VA system had problems. He outlined several complaints with the VA. First, the VA changed rules without telling veterans and he did not find out until he did not get paid.

> And the VA though, my biggest issue in all of it, in the organization, is that they change the rules and they do not tell anybody. Like with the hour cap, the money thing, the break pay, these are all done and you do not find out about it until you just do not get paid. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Second, Eric was not aware of all of the types of training that the education benefits such as the GI bill would pay for, such as trade or vocational school and even certification programs. "Even, but trade school, vocational school, and the VA pays for that, but they do not tell people that" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012). This was frustrating for him, as he may have chosen that route had he known. Third, Eric had been fighting for his disability claim even though he was medically discharged from the military.

> I will give you a great example. The VA, and the VA on the medical side, you know, they are there, but they are not really, because I have been fighting for my disability. I got med-boarded. My disability should have been instant, but it was not. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Eric received a very low rating, in his opinion, for someone with his disabilities, and he was now appealing the rating. "They said the appeal process would take 18 months. I did that three years ago" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012). Finally, Eric noted how some people working at VA offices became jaded and started to see veterans simply as numbers and not as people. It at this point, Eric maintained "if you become jaded, you should get out" and move on to another type of position (personal communication, November 29, 2012).

Like benefits issues, which also go through the VA, other types of Veterans Affairs issues act as inhibitors for student veterans to complete a teacher education program (ACE, 2008, 2009). Issues with the Department of Veterans Affairs range from disability claims to medical care and finally to benefits; balancing these issues with college attendance acts as an inhibitor for a student veteran to complete college (Gwin et al., 2012). This was found to deserve a separate theme because of the prominence of the issues reported by the two participants. Even if the student veteran is not having difficulty or problems with educational benefits, these VA issues can get in the way of a successful semester or complete college experience (ACE, 2008, 2009; Gwin et al., 2012). Research sub-question 5 asked: why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not? Having adequate care from the VA while attending college may act as an inhibitor, but with some of the problems the participants note with the VA, there are many veterans who will decide that dealing with the VA in any other capacity is too much and get a job instead of attending college (ACE, 2008, 2009; Gwin et al., 2012).

Inhibitor 7: Deferred Gratification

Randolfo Cano, attending ISU, and Eric Eastep, at BU, both indicated that deferred gratification could be an inhibitor to completing a teacher education program. Randolfo observed that the time to complete the degree or certification could be an inhibitor because veterans often have other transferrable skills that can lead to a good job without completing college. In order to combat this, however, he got a job that he really liked.

That's a long time. I think I kind of reconciled the fact that if I got a job that I really liked while I was going to school, like, I'd kill two birds with one stone. Not only am I earning a degree but I have a job. I didn't want to go be a bartender, you know, to go be a server . . . I don't want to just go to school and then have a side job. I want to go to school, but check this out, I had this awesome job that has taught me a lot and it's going to help me develop professionally. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

With a poor economy and a majority of part-time jobs being low-wage, the prospect of deferred gratification can get to be too much for some veterans, foregoing college altogether in lieu of full-time work right away.

Eric continues that most veterans, regardless of job specialty, can get a decent job in security when they get out, which makes the opportunity cost of attending or finishing a teacher education program higher.

When you get out, you are instantly bombarded with these job offers to do, ultimately security for the most part. And it is just like "Oh wait, you are going to pay me how much? I could get that now, or I could work my ass off for three and a half years, make—do some terrible job, make no money—be miserable, but then I will have a better job. But that is like so far away, and because in the military, if you know, there is not a whole lot of forward planning with your life and your career. It is a lot like, other than like "Oh, I am going to try to get my next rank," but it is like when you know, "Oh, this is going to happen" it is like "Well, please do not die today, please do not die today." So it is that and I think there is that worry of instant gratification. I think that, and I believe this even with all students, that college is not for everybody. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012)

In addition, completing the teacher education program may result in not making much money, which is an inhibitor. Veterans often have training in the military that is specialized and translates well into the civilian world, which can also contribute to the temptation of getting a job immediately or quitting after a semester or two to make more money using skills already obtained.

Research sub-question 1 asked: what are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active

134

duty? The idea of waiting another four to five years, after being discharged from the

military, to join the job market can be daunting for some individuals. Hollis (2009)

explained that many veterans leave the military with little to no money and families to

support, so they often seek a quick career transition. It is interesting to note that the two

individuals who mentioned this as an inhibitor were both single with no children. It may

be that those with a family may be able to reconcile the time spent in college better than

those who are single and more mobile. Either way, deferred gratification is an inhibitor

that many student veterans will undoubtedly face as they learn the process of getting

enrolled and completing a teacher education program (Hollis, 2009). Randolfo Cano's

experience addressed research sub-question 5: Why are some veterans able to overcome

inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others

are not? Randolfo decided to get a job that he liked a lot and at which he felt he could

make a difference, and that was what helped him deal with the prospect of deferred

gratification. This type of quick transition into a job that a student veteran feels was

appropriate while attending college may help with the prospect of deferred gratification

for some student veterans (Hollis, 2009).

Summary and Cross-Case Analysis of Inhibitors

The cross-case analysis of inhibitors addressed one part of the main research

question of this study: What are the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to

complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas using education

benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood

Exemption, after serving on active duty? In addition, the following research sub-question

was also addressed: What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher

education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? The operational

definition of inhibitor is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that

prevents or discourages the student veteran from completing the teacher education

program and initial certification. Each of the participants' data was included in this

analysis in order to determine which inhibitors are most salient for each of them.

Table 2 indicates the inhibitors reported by each student veteran participant.

Table 2

Inhibitors for Student Veterans in Teacher Education Program

	Irondale State Univeristy		Brooklake University	
Inhibitor	Josh Delgado	Randolfo Cano	Alfred Long	Eric Eastep
1. Not Feeling Understood/No Peer Group/ Lack of Support	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Mental Health/Health Issues		✓	✓	✓
3. Family Issues	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Difficult Transition	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Education Benefits Issues/Credit Transfer Difficulties/VA Office at the University	✓	✓	✓	✓
6. Department of Veterans Affairs Issues	✓			✓
7. Deferred Gratification		✓		✓
Total Number of Inhibitors Per Participant	5	6	5	7

The cross-case analysis revealed seven inhibitors that participants experienced

while enrolled in a teacher education program. Each inhibitor was reported by at least

two of the participants. Inhibitors included 1) not feeling understood/no peer group/lack

of support, 2) mental health issues/health issues, 3) family issues, 4) difficult transition,

5) education benefits issues/credit transfer issues/VA office at the university, 6)

Department of Veterans Affairs issues, and 7) deferred gratification.

All four veterans felt misunderstood or a lack of support while attending college

in a teacher education program. All four veterans also reported having a difficult

transition, family issues, and education benefits issues/credit transfer difficulties/VA Office at the University as inhibitors. Josh Delgado, attending ISU, was the only veteran to not have any mental health issues/health issues that acted as an inhibitor for him to complete his teacher education program, while the other three participants all experienced mental health/health issues as an inhibitor. Josh Delgado, of ISU, and Eric Eastep, of BU, both reported having issues with the Department of Veterans Affairs that acted as an inhibitor to completing the teacher education program. Finally, Randolfo Cano, of ISU, and Eric Eastep, of BU, reported deferred gratification as an inhibitor for completing a teacher education program.

Participants from Irondale State University did not report the VA office at the university or a lack of support as inhibitors. The total number of inhibitors reported by both participants at ISU was eleven. Credit transfer issues were reported by one participant at each university, indicating that both universities have areas of possible improvement in that department. Both participants from Brooklake University reported that the VA office at the university and that a lack of support as inhibitors, indicating a structural issue that may be able to be addressed by the university itself. The total number of inhibitors experienced by both participants at BU is twelve.

Although participants attending BU reported experiencing one more inhibitor than participants at ISU, the difference is negligible between sites. The following inhibitors were unanimously reported by every participant: 1) not feeling understood/no peer group/lack of support, 2) family issues, 3) difficult transition, and 4) education benefits issues/credit transfer difficulties/VA office at the university. Mental health /health issues were inhibitors for three participants. Department of Veterans Affairs issues and deferred

137

gratification were inhibitors for two participants, with Eric Eastep (BU) being the only person with all inhibiting factors. Josh Delgado (ISU) and Alfred Long (BU) reported suffering only five inhibitors each. Eric Eastep's (BU) interview revealed that he had encountered all seven inhibitors identified in the research. Randolfo Cano (ISU) has dealt with every inhibitor except for Department of Veterans Affairs issues. This is likely because Randolfo was a member of the Illinois and then Texas National Guard and, although he had five years of medical coverage upon returning from deployment (federal service) and was within those five years, he had not had any issues with the VA as of yet. Since each participant in the study was on track to complete his teacher education program, it was apparent that the mix of inhibitors experienced had not reached a critical mass for him because he was still in the program. To date, Eric Eastep had graduated and obtained his initial teacher licensure, and he was the student veteran who reports all seven inhibitors.

There was a wide range of severity of the inhibitors reported by participants. One inhibitor may be strong enough to cause a veteran to leave a teacher education program or leave college altogether. While each participant reported experiencing inhibitors, each of them was on track to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial licensure. The fact that each participant was continuing on was no doubt affected by the presence of enablers that counteract the inhibiting factors enough to have allowed the veteran to remain in college.

Cross-Case Analysis: Enablers

The following cross-case analysis of enablers addressed one part of the main research question of this study: what are the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era

138

veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas using education benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, after serving on active duty? In addition, the following research sub-questions were also addressed: why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not? Why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others? What are the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty? The operational definition of enabler is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that helps the student veteran overcome inhibitors and facilitates the completion of the teacher education program and initial certification. Pseudonyms have been used for both the university sites as well as for study participants. Each of the participants' data was included in this analysis in order to determine which enablers were most salient for each of them.

Enabler 1: Education Benefits

All four participants indicated that the biggest enabler for them was their education benefits. Josh Delgado and Alfred Long revealed that they were both looking for jobs, and when they could not find a job, decided to use their education benefits to attend college and get trained for a job. Alfred Long reported that the economy also played a role in his decision.

> Well, I will be honest, if I had not found a job that paid decently, I probably might
> have put off or just gone to evening classes or may not have even gone back to
> college. But because of the economy and not finding a job that I was comfortable
> with, going to college on the College Fund would do in the meantime and
> hopefully increase my odds of getting a job in that time. (A. Long, personal
> communication, December 14, 2012).

139

When he started teaching, however, Alfred had to go back to college to get his Master's

Degree in order to obtain his teaching certification.

Josh Delgado observed that the Post-9/11 GI Bill paid for tuition, housing, and

books. He also received a retirement check along with the GI Bill.

> I go to school full time so I get BAH [housing allowance] on top of, you know,
> paying for all my books and school, so. I mean, it is not enough if my wife was
> not working to have a house and everything, but it is decent, you know. (J.
> Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

Randolfo Cano reported that he has had several education benefits to help pay for

college. "I had the student loan repayment program and I also had the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

And FTA – Federal Tuition Assistance" (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9,

2012). Alfred Long joined from Texas so he had the Hazlewood Exemption available,

but also had both the Army College Fund and the Post-9/11 GI Bill to cover his costs. "I

have only used my Hazlewood for requirements under [Brooklake's] Education

Department" (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012). Eric Eastep was

also using the Post-9/11 GI Bill to attend college and had recently passed his initial

teacher certification exams.

Education benefits possibly available because of military service include Federal

Tuition Assistance, student loan repayment program, the Army College Fund, the GI Bill,

and the Hazlewood Exemption for veterans who joined the military from Texas (College

for all Texans, 2012; Moynahan, 2009; Spaulding, 2000; U.S. Department of Veterans

Affairs, 2012). In addressing the primary research question, education benefits was one

of the top enablers for veterans to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial

certification. While not every veteran had each of these benefits, all participants had the

GI Bill available for use. The fact that there was a program available to pay for tuition,

fees, books, and offered a housing allowance was a stupendous enabler to allow veterans

to attend college and complete a teacher education program (U.S. Department of

Veterans Affairs, 2012). While only a few of the participants said they would not be able

to attend college without education benefits accrued as a result of military service, it was

undoubtedly an important enabler for each veteran, as it has been throughout history

(Spaulding, 2000). The research sub-question that asked why some veterans have more

enabling factors than others was partially addressed in this section, as there were a wide

range of education benefits available for veterans, depending on branch of service and

programs offered at the time of enlistment (Thomas, 2009; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009).

Enabler 2: Institutional Enablers at the University

　　　All four participants described institutional enablers at the university, other than

the VA Office at the University, that have helped them continue in their program,

although they differed from each other. These institutional enablers included campus

services, tuition waivers, individual departments in the university, as well as ways for

veterans to get involved on campus.

　　　Josh Delgado used campus services, such as the writing center and homework

help to aid him in completing his teacher education program. When asked to describe

how he overcame inhibitors, Josh emphatically replied

> One thing I use everything—the benefits as far as campus—like the writing
> center, you know when you go to orientation they say "You are paying for this
> stuff so you might as well use it." The student instructors . . . I meet with people
> who can help me with my homework or help me with my test or whatever. So I
> use that as well. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

These services helped Josh to continue successfully in his education program, as he had

not been a full time student in nearly thirty years.

Randolfo Cano stressed that the out-of-state tuition waiver granted to veterans at ISU was a significant enabler for him to choose this school. "I saw this as a sign that I should—that this is the right place" (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012). This was a significant enabler, as in-state tuition and fees at ISU for 2012-2013 were $8,770 and out-of-state tuition and fees were $19,302 (U.S. News & World Report, 2013b).

Alfred Long reported that finding a way to get involved on campus was an enabler for him, and he was able to do this in two ways: 1) He was able to teach a geology and biology lab while working on his Master's Degree, which gave him more of a connection, and 2) Alfred worked to start a veterans group on campus.

> While I was there I went ahead a founded a student veterans organization. There was not one at the time and I just, I wanted to know if other veterans were having difficulty readjusting to civilian life because my first semester back, I just, I had nobody to call and check up on me, there were no NCOs who were going to breathe down my neck and say "Why were you late?" It was a bit of a readjustment. And after that first semester, I said "Alright, to hell with this. I cannot do this alone. I am going to find other veterans and we are going to work it out together." So I founded the student veterans organization, found out later there was a national one that started up at almost the same time. And so we started some of our basic work to join SVA but also to get a decent student veterans organization going. We brought in speakers, Norma Cumber at [Brooklake] University was our sponsor and she was a big supporter and helped. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Both of these activities gave Alfred the ability to interact with others on campus as well as to connect to other veterans. He also reported enjoying the leadership opportunities both of these experiences were able to allow him to take while at school, which made the connection stronger.

Eric Eastep remarked that the English Department at BU was extremely helpful to him, working with him each semester to change his degree plan to get it approved for the

VA office so he could get his education benefits. "I got, I had a degree plan—and basically the English Department did this for me—they brought my degree plan over to the VA" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012). There were professors in the department who would modify and sign off on the plan each semester to make sure Eric was eligible for the GI Bill; often, they had to make changes to the degree plan after Eric had the VA office at BU check it over, and they always helped him. Eric also shared that the steps to use the GI Bill at the university were painless as well.

Universities can do a lot to enable student veterans to be successful in a teacher education program in addition to having a good VA office on campus. Ensuring veterans have knowledge of and access to campus services offered to all students, including a writing center and tutors was enabling. The out-of-state tuition waiver at Irondale State University was a strong enabler that was likely to attract numerous veterans who were considering moving to Texas to attend college for teacher education, as Randolfo Cano did. Student veteran groups that were recognized by the university were enabling, as was offering student veterans ways to get involved on campus, as Alfred Long reported. Finally, individual academic departments can support veterans in a variety of ways, from making veterans feel comfortable to helping student veterans navigate the process of getting benefits figured out and with other issues.

Institutional enablers at the university addresses the primary research question as well as two research sub-questions. Research sub-question 5 was addressed: why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not? The variety of institutional enablers offered to students was an enabler to help overcome inhibitors, but equally important was to ensure

that student veterans are aware of all of the possible programs and assistance

opportunities available to students (Hollis, 2009; Persky & Oliver, 2011). Research sub-

question 6 asked: why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others? This

sub-question was partially addressed in this section as well, as some veterans were aware

of the variety of programs and assistance offered to students while others were not.

Simply being made aware of these programs and how to go about using them is an

integral first step (ACE, 2008, 2009; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009).

Enabler 3: Good Attitude/Self-Advocate

All four participants account for some part of personal success with the fact that

he had a good attitude, which is often implicit, and/or being a self-advocate when

necessary. This is an immense enabler, as each of the participants had faced some

remarkable inhibitors and each one was able overcome them, in part, because of this trait.

This enabler, along with education benefits, was possibly the most significant enabler

possessed by student veterans.

Josh Delgado exhibited a good attitude when asked about how it was when he

asked for transfer credits or other types of consideration for his military experience and

experienced difficulty:

> No. No. I just, you know, it is just one of the things you got to do. I mean, you
> go to be able to, you know—the most, like I have always been told, you know, the
> worst thing they can do is to tell you no. The most they can do is say "Nope." (J.
> Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012).

Josh continued that he had to continually be a spokesperson for himself because nobody

else was going to do it for him.

I guess just being a very good, like my own spokesperson, I guess, for lack of a better term. Advocate, yeah! I think that is the biggest one right there. (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

Consistent with a good attitude was having a plan, which was important to Josh and his wife when he got out. "I think me and my family actually having a plan to get out is very crucial" (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012). The plan that Josh and his wife made allowed them to be able to save money in advance for a down payment on a house when he was discharged.

Randolfo Cano exhibited a great deal of personal tenacity during the interview. He affirmed that he did a lot of research online regarding his benefits and how they would be affected when he moved to Texas, but that it was all there if you look for it. He shared his view of what it takes:

You have to be proactive . . . I mean, the Army will spell it out, just the military will spell it out to you, step-by-step, every single time. You just got to look. And it takes a little bit of hard work, but you'll find it. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

Randolfo also had the ability to get himself out of the "rut," as he described his possible depression after returning from deployment. He observed that he was able to rationalize his feelings and decided that he needed to figure out what makes him happy.

Eventually I realized "Hey, you need to find what makes you happy." Well what makes me happy, I figured, helping others. That's what makes me happy. So "Okay, that's what you have to do. You have to help others. Okay. Where would you like to go to help others?" because I had to leave Illinois. I said "Texas, Austin. As close to Austin as I want to get." That's what I liked when I was a sophomore in college. Before I even joined the military I like that place. "That's where I want to go, I want to go there and help others." So eventually I did a summer camp in Killeen for the C5U Foundation and I went through that one summer. I ended up working for them two summers, but that summer kind of brought me back to reality and you realize what's important and then I was like "Oh, this is what I want to do. I'm going to move to Austin and start going to school. I'm going to move down here and start going to school." Well, I didn't know I was going to go to school. I said I want to help others I'll move down

here and help others. I got here, I want to help others, and then I eventually kind of fell into coming to [Irondale] State and getting my Master's and my certification in education. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

In addition, Randolfo was able to deal with the prospect of deferred gratification by finding a job that he really liked and where he could help people while he attended his teaching program. This job was flexible with his school schedule, enabled him to grow professionally while in college, and although Randolfo reported that he did not make much money, he was able to make a difference.

Alfred Long displayed self-advocacy and personal awareness with his decision to seek mental health counseling, which he attended every other week for four months. According to Alfred, "I decided I needed the help, but when I realized I could not get it [with the counselor], I realized that I would have to help myself since I was the only one I could rely on" (A. Long, personal interview, December 14, 2012). Alfred's attitude was also influenced by his inability to workout due to his medical issues, which was previously a stress reducer for him.

> And so I went ahead and did it anyway, found some exercises that would help me. Swimming in particular. [Brooklake] University has a wonderful pool. And so I started building up on my swimming, swimming significantly more often, trying to spend a little more time outdoors in some sunlight. Who knows? Maybe it was just a vitamin D deficiency, but, that was the kicker. I just decided to go ahead and exercise, get some sunlight, go out a little bit more often. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

It was at a barbeque that Alfred decided to attend that he was lucky enough to meet his current wife. Alfred reported that his decision to grow a mustache was also helpful because when he trimmed it he was forced to smile. "So at least once a day, or every other day, if you are going to trim the mustache, you are going to have to smile, and if that is the only smile you have all day, at least you smiled" (A. Long, personal

146

communication, December 14, 2012). All of this helped Alfred to start to come out of his

depression. Finally, Alfred wrote in a journal to help him vent. He stated that he usually

wrote fiction to get out his frustrations, which he did not show to anyone, but that he was

also keeping a family log for his children, which was therapeutic for him.

Eric Eastep had a personal awareness and was not afraid to discuss his problems

with those at the university, so he was able to get the help he needed. Eric reported not

being afraid to talk to his professors about his PTSD and the accommodations he needed

for it, which made the classes much easier for him to attend.

> I registered—I had a doctor do the thing where you talk to the special education
> department . . . And I have a modification where I can always sit in the back of
> classrooms. I have never once had to make a big deal about it because I would
> always just go to the professor and be like "hey, I was in the Army for seven
> years. I have PTSD. I need to sit in the back!" And they are like "Why?" "I do
> not like people behind me." "Oh that makes sense. Okay. We are not going to
> ask you any questions." So I would sit in the back. And most English classes here
> are three rows of seats, so I am basically in the third row. (E. Eastep, personal
> communication, November 29, 2012)

Eric shared that he is not afraid to discuss mental health because of his experience with it

in the military.

> Kind of, part of it is because I did work in mental health, that I am not ashamed of
> mental health. But also it is one of those things where I know where I have
> issues, so I can either A, hide from it or B, like swear off against it right away and
> just, like—because if you are afraid of it, it owns you. (E. Eastep, personal
> communication, November 29, 2012)

Eric also had the attitude that he was not afraid to make phone calls or sit and wait to

speak to the appropriate person in order to get something done. He asserted that he was

willing to make phone calls and has sat, waiting, in an office for up to four hours in order

to see the person who could help him with something he needs. Eric described his

attitude:

147

this is what I want, this is what I need, I am going to sit here. And I had no problem with just sitting, and waiting. It makes people mad, but just like "I will sit here. You will be ready in four hours? Okay." I sat there, got out a book, just sat there, and eventually they got tired of seeing me, so, but that came a lot from that idea in the military: hurry up and wait. (personal communication, November 29, 2012)

This willingness to sit and wait for answers was an example of the willingness Eric had to be his own self-advocate. He was not afraid to stand up for himself and follow the proper protocol in order to ensure that certain steps were taken.

Personal tenacity, a good attitude, and/or being a self-advocate in college was a powerful enabler for student veterans in college (Murphy, 2011), which addresses the main research question. It must be noted that all four participants were Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs - rank E-4 or above) and that may have played a role in individual efficacy. This may help answer research sub-question 6: why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others? In every branch of military service, NCOs were given more responsibility and higher-level tasks and left to complete them with their own devices, plus they were required to continue their education (McCree, 1993). Whether individuals ascend to this level because of this personal tenacity or self-advocacy or they develop it while serving as an NCO is impossible to ascertain. However, there was certainly a correlation noted in the qualitative interviews conducted for this study.

Enabler 4: Spouse/Family Support

All four participants indicated that spousal or family support was a great enabler. Josh Delgado had a wife and two kids, and declared that his wife was both a supporter of as well as an advocate for him. "Like I said, my boys are still young, so mostly my wife

148

and her family. My family lives in Kansas so her family is here in San Antonio" (J.

Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012). Josh's wife's family was

supportive of him in the teacher education program and helped out when it was needed,

according to Josh.

When describing his support system, Randolfo Cano listed his parents, two close

friends who are also veterans, and his National Guard Unit. Randolfo replied:

> I think I'm spoiled. I have a lot things, a lot of people don't have, you know. I
> have a really good mom and dad, you know. I have a lot of really awesome
> friends and family, so I . . . You know, I had my unit and they always offered, you
> know, any kind of support that we needed. Counseling, a lot of guys sought it,
> you know, it wasn't a big deal. I saw a chaplain once just to kind of talk some
> things out and that was always made available to my unit, and, yeah, I mean I had
> all the support that I needed. If I wanted more support I could have always gotten
> it, gotten more. This fact that I didn't seek out more support—I just didn't feel
> like I needed it or I didn't need it at that time. But I had it available to me.
> (personal communication, November 9, 2012).

Randolfo maintained that having drill once a month has really helped because his unit

was comforting.

> I think it helps that there's people you can talk to and if you don't want to talk to
> your immediate family you can go by the armory and talk to a chaplain or, you
> know, just talk to one of your NCOs, or whatever it is. I think the fact that it is
> available, I think that's comforting. (R. Cano, personal communication,
> November 9, 2012)

Members of his unit had similar experiences, understood and saw things the way he did,

and they had a bond like no other because of the shared experiences in the military. In

addition, Randolfo did stop in and see his unit chaplain, who is available for the troops,

one time.

Alfred Long described his family as his major support during his transition.

"Now, luckily I moved back to the same region I had my large extended family, and so I

could ask some of them" (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012).

Alfred declared that when he was down and trying to overcome his depression, he was invited to a barbeque where he

> met a very lovely lady who just lifted my spirits. Pretty, intelligent, nerd after my own heart. And we have been married a little over a year now. In a lot of ways she has been my best therapy. (personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Alfred also shared that he had several friends that have been supportive of him since he was discharged, with the only problem being that "none of them had been through the same situation" (personal communication, December 14, 2012).

Eric Eastep revealed that he had "almost zero support" (personal communication, November 29, 2012) from his family, but that this changed with his mother as time passed. When asked about support as an enabler, Eric responded "the support channel I have is my mother, my father, my grandmother. Yeah. And my sister now" (personal communication, November 29, 2012).   Eric's mother was not supportive of him getting a degree in English, but she "turned around in a big bad way, and she was a huge enabler" (personal communication, November 29, 2012) after he chose to be a teacher. His mom worked at a university, where she taught nursing, so she was able to help him with registration and getting financial aid in college. Eric's grandmother was also supportive:

> My grandmother, bless her heart, she will sit there and listen to me jabber on about all the English stuff that she has no idea what I am talking about but just letting me talk about it . . . it was nice to be able to share something that I enjoyed. (personal communication, November 29, 2012)

Interestingly, although Eric described his father as not being supportive, when asked to list enablers, he still listed his father as being an enabler. It is unclear why he did this, but he clearly listed the ways his father did not support him and then included him in the conversation of enablers.

Family and/or spousal support is essential if a person is going to be successful in college, but even more important in some respects for student veteran, as veterans often have other difficulties, such as health problems, to contend with as well (Hogan & Seifert, 2010). This section addressed research sub-question 5: why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not? It also addresses research sub-question 6: Why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others? If a student veteran has spousal or familial support, it can go a long way toward enabling the student to continue on in a program. For example, if family is willing to help with child care that can help in numerous ways, to include the financial benefit of not having to pay for child care to being confident that the children are in good hands while the student veteran is in class. Now each family has a different dynamic, so it is understandable that some families will be more likely to be supportive, and as a result, more enabling than others. Divorced veterans are least likely to graduate from college, according to Taniguchi and Kaufman (2005). Over half of active-duty military members are married (Hogan & Seifert, 2010) and veterans have much higher divorce rates than non-veterans (Lundquist, 2007), so clearly families and marital status can have a large impact on student veteran college success. Having peers, or friends, that understand the student veteran and share some similar experiences was also important to enable veterans to complete a teacher education program (ACE, 2008; Selber et al., 2011). Individuals in a unit often become close like family during a deployment or when enduring difficult and strenuous training, which helps provide a bond.

Enabler 5: Information from Military on Education Benefits

Josh Delgado, Randolfo Cano, and Eric Eastep all reported receiving training and information on education benefits while in the military that has helped them at various times. Alfred Long described his training as not being very helpful:

> I think it is, like a mandatory three days, mandatory one day, and everything else is fluff. And so I remember there being about a half-day briefing regarding college benefits, but I either did not retain it or it did not make any sense; and likely it, I did not retain it because it did not make any sense if you have nothing to put it into context with. (personal communication, December 14, 2012)

It was for this reason that Alfred reported having to rely on the Veterans Affairs office at the university to help him with his questions and problems.

Josh Delgado said that "it is mandatory for anybody who is ETSing or retiring to go to a, basically a two-hour seminar on the 9-11 or on the Montgomery and 9-11 GI Bill benefits" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). This seminar taught Josh what he needed to know to utilize the GI Bill effectively. He continued, noting that all the information could be easily found online whenever he has a question.

In keeping with Josh's description, Randolfo Cano also emphasized that the Army was really good at explaining benefits. Randolfo mentioned that he had video tutorials, PowerPoints were available, packets of information were provided, and they were taught verbally about benefits. Randolfo asserted that "I mean, the Army will spell it out, just the military will spell it out to you, step-by-step, every single time. You just got to look. And it takes a little bit of hard work, but you'll find it" (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012). His de-mobilization training was really good and helpful, Randolfo reported. When describing his classes on benefits, Randolfo stated that "it's kind of like those military death-by-PowerPoints kind of thing….So I know those

PowerPoints are horrible, but they should keep doing them. It's good" (personal

communication, November 9, 2012). This information was useful for Randolfo to utilize

his benefits when he moved to Texas to pursue a teaching certificate.

Eric Eastep shared similar stories to both Josh and Randolfo in regards to

information made available to him regarding benefits while he was in the Army. He

observed that he had a great Sergeant on active duty that would find out anything he

needed to know regarding any and all military educational benefits. This Sergeant would

explain education benefits to all soldiers, regardless of what they wanted to do when they

were discharged.

> I had an awesome education Sergeant at my, at the research lab, who, I was in
> when they did the initial changeover. I was just about to get out, but he set all the
> soldiers down that were, you know, basically under thirty. Sat us down at his
> computer and forced us all to do the changeover from the old Montgomery GI Bill
> to the Post-9/11 GI Bill . . . I mean, just one of these guys that just bend over
> backwards to help you. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29,
> 2012)

Eric proclaimed that if the Sergeant was asked a question he could not answer, he would

sit on the phone for hours in order to get the answer, which was very helpful.

As this theme reveals, information provided by the military on education benefits

can be extremely useful and beneficial to student veterans, which contradicts much of

current research (ACE, 2008, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009).

While there is not much universities can do influence this enabler, the military can

continue to educate veterans on education benefits upon discharge. This section

addresses two research sub-questions. Research sub-question 5 asked: why are some

veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial

certification while others are not? The training offered or mandated by the individual

branch of service greatly influenced this section. While it could be assumed that this training was nearly uniform, it can likely vary a great deal. Having an understanding of what benefits are available, how to use them, or even who to call if you have a question can be a great enabler to completing a teacher education program. Research sub-question 6 is also addressed in this section: why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others? Alfred Long did not report information from the military on education benefits as an enabler. This is likely because he had already attended college and was not sure he was going to go back to college after being discharged. This can have an appreciable impact on whether the individual veteran pays attention in training, whether or not he or she plans to attend college at all. In addition, there can be variations in the training provided based on branch of service or even by unit. Eric Eastep's example of a sergeant who went the extra mile is an enabler that is not going to be at every unit. Again, this was an emerging theme that contradicts some of the current research that reports that there are information and bureaucratic issues that are inhibitors for student veterans in college (ACE, 2008, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008; Rumann & Hamrick, 2009).

Enabler 6: Veterans Affairs Office at the University

　　　Three participants found the VA office run by the University to be a large enabler except for Eric, who was very critical of this office. It is unclear why he was the outlier on this issue, but it may be related to his mental health issues and his ability to deal effectively with people. He was easy to talk to and visit with during the interview, however, and although he made a few statements that did not seem to fit the question that was being asked, he was both cordial and conversational.

Josh Delgado, who attended ISU, declared that "the veteran's office here has been really good" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). He was surprised at how long it took to get his certificate of eligibility and the VA office at the university got it in three days before he would be dropped. "They actually made it. You know, from the time they got my certificate and I filled out the application it was three days and they made it without a problem" (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012). Josh reported that it was very nice to have people available to answer questions about financial aid, forms, and other requirements for his educational benefits. He exclaimed that "everything I went in and asked for, they helped out" (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012).

Randolfo Cano also expressed satisfaction with the VA office at the university: "the Veterans Affairs [office] here is really good. They're fantastic" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). He described how the office was a point of contact and that they were there to offer support as well as to guide you through all the requirements for your entire time at the university.

> It's really awesome, just because when I applied here, they are, I guess it was one of those questions on my application. I was a veteran and all of a sudden I was linked to the veteran emails, and I got a personal emails from a couple of the veteran guys, like "Hey, you have to do this," and then I called them over, I'd swing by the office and they're like "Hey, you have to certify. You have to fill out this form. You know, you have to have it in by this day," and they were really awesome about it. Like all it took was an email or two and just a couple of calls and I kind of knew the right way. Just if you have…like I said, if you have really awesome people like they have here, they will hold your hand all the way through. … I mean, they'll guide you through it. And they did it for me. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

The Veterans Affairs office at the university was responsive to phone calls or emails,

Randolfo shared, and they were proactive about sending all the veterans updates via

email on anything that concerned veterans on campus.

Alfred Long relied on the VA office at the university to answer his questions and

help him when he had issues with his education benefits.

> I was able to find out quite a bit from the VA office at [Brooklake] University. They were extraordinarily helpful. They were able to tell me how the system works, how the process works . . . So the school's VA office and school's VA representative were very helpful. Let me know what paperwork needed to be done, gave me very good estimates on when I could expect what payments, and roughly how much, based off of everything. I could not have done it without them. If Mrs. [Antalia] or anyone else at the VA office at the school had been even remotely unhelpful, then that would have been a serious stumbling block. (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Now this contradicted Eric Eastep's report of the VA office at Brooklake being "broke

like all get-out" (personal communication, November 29, 2012). These are two highly

conflicting accounts of the VA office at Brooklake University and it is unclear as to why

these accounts are so different. Alfred Long is nearly ten years older than Eric Eastep

and both suffer from mental health issues, but it may be related to their approach to the

people working in the VA office. They were attending during years that overlapped, so

they were certain to have dealt with the same individuals, but they reported two very

contradictory experiences.

The Veterans Affairs office at the University is most certainly an area where

colleges and universities can help increase enablers for veterans to overcome inhibitors

(Murphy, 2011). This addressed research sub-question 6: why are some veterans able to

overcome to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others

are not? If the VA office at the university was not well-organized or does not offer the

type of outreach offered at ISU, veterans may not feel well-supported and may have

benefits issues, as Bauman (2009) contends. Some veterans may not feel the need to use

the VA office at the university for anything besides the required paperwork to enroll

because they are confident in their own abilities to find answers to their own questions.

This alternative may mean that veterans are able to be successful at universities without a

VA office or with an ineffective one. Regardless, universities can greatly increase the

enabling factors for veterans by having a quality, effective, and proactive Veterans

Affairs office at the university (Murphy, 2011).

Enabler 7: Peer Group

Having a peer group to interact with was registered by both Randolfo Cano (ISU)

and Alfred Long (BU) as an enabling factor. This is listed as an inhibitor above, as Josh

Delgado and Alfred Long both shared that lack of a peer group made completing the

teacher education program more difficult. The fact that two participants were lacking a

peer group and sought it shows that it can possibly serve as an inhibitor if some type of

peer group is not available for student veterans (ACE, 2008).

Eric Eastep revealed that he did not seek out a peer group at all because he was

somewhat of a loner.

> I like to keep to myself. I am not big into—I got over the whole I need to be
> around lots of people and stuff like that—so I really do keep a very reclusive life.
> I have a couple friends that I still talk to, but it is nothing if they do not hear from
> me for a year. (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012).

While there were certain individuals who did not seek peer support, there are a numerous

student veterans who prefer to have a peer support group, according to DiRamio et al.

(2008) and Gwin et al. (2012).

157

Josh Delgado reported seeking a peer group but noted that not finding one was an inhibitor. Josh shared that "I guess the only thing that I would like to see more of is, I guess more social interaction" (J. Delgado, personal communication, November 9, 2012). Randolfo Cano had two close friends who were also veterans that he interacted with regularly and indicated that talking to the NCOs or peers in his unit during monthly drill was also comforting. Randolfo shared that he saw these two friends every day while he still lived in Illinois and that they still kept up, because they could understand some of what he went through being deployed.

Alfred Long was seeking a peer group on campus so he started a campus student veteran organization to work things out together. When asked if it helped, Alfred replied "It helped significantly. It gave me a bit of a focus. Instead of having to deal with my own issues, I was able to help others and that, in turn, helped me" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). Alfred claimed that the student veterans were able to discuss matters important to them and to tackle issues together rather than feeling like they each had to take care of them alone.

Summary and Cross-Case Analysis of Enablers

There were seven enablers that participants noted as helping them overcome inhibitors to completing a teacher education program and initial certification. These included 1) education benefits, 2) institutional enablers at the university, 3) good attitude/self-advocate, 4) information from military on education benefits, 6) Veterans Affairs office at the university, and 7) a peer group. The operational definition of enabler is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that helps the student veteran overcome inhibitors and facilitates the completion of the teacher education

158

program and initial certification. Table 3 presents the enablers reported by each student

veteran participant.

Table 3

Enablers for Student Veterans in Teacher Education Program

Enabler	Irondale State Univeristy		Brooklake University	
	Josh Delgado	Randolfo Cano	Alfred Long	Eric Eastep
1. Education Benefits	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Institutional Enablers at University	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Good Attitude/Self-Advocate	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Spouse/Family Support	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Information from Military on Ed. Benefits	✓	✓		✓
6. VA Office at the University	✓	✓	✓	
7. Peer Group		✓	✓	
Total Number of Enablers/Participant	6	7	6	5

All participants indicated a number of enablers to help complete a teacher

education program. Out of the seven themes that emerged in the study, Eric Eastep (BU)

reported the fewest enablers with five. Alfred Long (BU) and Josh Delgado (ISU)

experienced six each while Randolfo Cano (ISU) indicated that he had each of the

enablers revealed in the study. The total number of enablers reported by participants at

ISU was 13, whereas at BU the total number of enablers was 11. Alfred Long described

each enabler except for information from the military on education benefits. Eric Eastep

did not relate to the VA office at the university or a peer group as enablers, but did report

on the other five. It was clear from these results that student veteran participants in this

study had a great deal of enablers that helped them overcome inhibitors experienced in

the course of their studies. It was impossible to discern but was likely that veterans who

have either quit college or did not ever enroll in the first place may not have had enough

of the enablers to overcome the inhibitors experienced. The VA office at the university

was an inhibitor for both Alfred Long and Eric Eastep at BU, but was included as an enabler for Josh Delgado and Randolfo Cano at ISU and Alfred Long. Alfred's main problem with the VA office at the university was that there were no veterans working in the office, which made it more difficult to feel understood. He did report, however, that the VA office at the university was helpful in answering questions and sending out emails as to deadlines, which was closely related to reports by both Josh Delgado and Randolfo Cano at ISU.

Like inhibitors, each individual enabler experienced by a student veteran can have a wide range of impacts on the propensity to complete a teacher education program. The two most prominent enablers were education benefits and good attitude/self-advocate. Education benefits accounted for nearly the complete cost of a college education at public colleges and universities, while having a good attitude or being a self-advocate helped student veterans to overcome a number of inhibitors. As this research shows, there was no one specific recipe of enablers to inhibitors to help veterans continue in a teacher education program, as there were disparities in the accounts by individual participants. Rather, each individual had a specific blend that had served him well on his journey.

Cross-Case Analysis: Enablers versus Inhibitors

Each participant in this study had experience with both inhibitors, which made completing a teacher education program difficult, as well as enablers to help overcome inhibitors. There did not appear to be any specific pattern for enablers versus inhibitors, but it was clear the every participant had several enablers to counteract inhibitors reported. The desire to teach was the first enabler discussed above and undoubtedly played a large role for student veterans to persevere and continue on in a teacher

education program. Each participant indicated a desire to make a difference and serve by teaching, which was supported by research on successful veterans who have become teachers in the Troops to Teachers Program (Feistritzer, 2005; Willett, 2002).

One of the most powerful enablers for the participants was the education benefits, which helped each student veteran to attend college with little to no direct costs involved. This enabler can help to counteract family issues related to finances and can help make a difficult transition more bearable. Having education benefits can possibly help veterans control problems with deferred gratification by allowing the veteran more latitude in finding a job that he or she likes or reducing worries about finances a bit.

Institutional enablers at the university, such as campus services, tuition waivers, individual departments within the university, or ways for veterans to get involved on campus can help alleviate issues caused by education benefits issues/credit transfer difficulties/VA office at the university as well as to help address a difficult transition. If the university has a plan to deal with some of these issues, they will be addressed before the student veteran is forced to bring them up him or herself. These issues can also help reduce the feelings veterans reported of not feeling understood/no peer group/lack of support.

A good attitude/self-advocate was possibly the greatest enabler for any student veteran in a teacher education program. Having a good attitude or being a self-advocate can address any of the inhibitors listed. While three participants have mental health/health issues, having a good attitude or being a self-advocate has helped each one in this area. For example, Eric Eastep suffered from PTSD but was willing to share this information with professors when asking for help in classes in regard to seating. This

attitude and willingness to address a weakness helped alleviate the inhibitor experienced. In addition, being a self-advocate was essential when dealing with any type of bureaucracy, be it the university itself or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Spouse or family support can make or break a student veteran in a teacher education program, and can contribute to having a good attitude/self-advocate as an enabler. Of course family issues were addressed more easily if there was spouse/family support, but all other inhibitors could be positively affected if this enabler was present for the student veteran.

Information from the military on education benefits was an unexpected theme that three participants reported during interviews. This enabler has addressed several inhibitors, to include a difficult transition and education benefits issues/credit transfer difficulties/VA office at the university. The information received in classes and presentations for those getting out of the military was useful and helped reduce stress on many levels, according to participants.

The VA office at the university can act as an inhibitor or enabler, depending on how it was administered. Two veterans had this office listed as an inhibitor while three listed it as an enabler. Alfred Long reported the VA office at the university as both an inhibitor and enabler, as there were no veterans working in the office, but they provided good information and support. The VA office at the university, if set up and used to help benefit student veterans in an effective way, can help address several inhibitors, such as not feeling understood/no peer group/lack of support, difficult transition, or education benefits issues/credit transfer difficulties/VA office at the university. This theme was

included as both an enabler and inhibitor, so the possible power that this office can have in either direction was of immense importance to student veterans.

Table 4 provides both inhibitors and enablers for student veteran participants at both university sites.

Table 4

Summary of Inhibitors and Enablers for Student Veterans in Teacher Education Program

	Irondale State University		Brooklake University	
Inhibitors	Josh Delgado	Randolfo Cano	Alfred Long	Eric Eastep
1. Not Feeling Understood/No Peer Group/ Lack of Support	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Mental Health/Health Issues		✓	✓	✓
3. Family Issues	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Difficult Transition	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Education Benefits Issues/Credit Transfer Difficulties/VA Office at the University	✓	✓	✓	✓
6. Department of Veterans Affairs Issues	✓			✓
7. Deferred Gratification		✓		✓
Total Number of Inhibitors per Participant	5	6	5	7

Enablers	Josh Delgado	Randolfo Cano	Alfred Long	Eric Eastep
1. Education Benefits	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Institutional Enablers at University	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Good Attitude/Self-Advocate	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Spouse/Family Support	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Information from Military on Ed. Benefits	✓	✓		✓
6. VA Office at the University	✓	✓	✓	
7. Peer Group		✓	✓	
Total Number of Enablers per Participant	6	7	6	5

Having a peer group was another theme reported as both an enabler and inhibitor by participants. Randolfo Cano (ISU) and Alfred Long (BU) shared that having a peer group was an enabler while Josh Delgado (ISU) communicated that lack of a peer group was an inhibitor. Eric Eastep (BU) was an outlier who did not seek out a peer group because he was a self-described loner. A peer group can help with every inhibitor reported by participants, as peer groups can be supportive, help answer questions and

163

work through problems or issues together, and to make student veterans in a teacher education program feel that he or she was not alone.

There is no recipe for enablers versus inhibitors that can be proven to work, as it will differ for each individual. In fact, participants were silent on a direct relationship between enablers and inhibitors in their experiences. There is no doubt that if enablers are not present or powerful for student veterans, inhibitors have the potential to overwhelm a student veteran and keep him or her from completing a teacher education program. It is essential for colleges and universities, education programs, families of student veterans, and student veterans to support the higher education of student veterans to ensure that they will be able to use education benefits to become teachers and continue to serve the country in a different way.

Findings and Summary of Major Themes

The research question for this study is: What are the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas using education benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, after serving on active duty? Research sub-questions are as follows:

1. What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

2. What are the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

3. How can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

4. How can teacher education programs support the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

5. Why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not?

6. Why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others?

The themes outlined in this chapter speak to the main research question and all research sub-questions, in some form.

The cross-case analysis of interview transcripts exposed similar reasons for wanting to become a teacher. In addition to wanting to make a difference and share a love of learning, all four participants signified a desire to teach because of teaching experience gained while in the military. This was important because it seemed that being a non-commissioned officer in the military has a tendency to influence the individual to become a teacher. The desire to become a teacher is a potentially powerful enabler for veterans to overcome inhibitors, regardless of the initial reason to consider teaching as a career path.

The cross-case analysis revealed seven inhibitors that participants experienced while enrolled in a teacher education program. Each inhibitor was reported by at least two of the participants. Inhibitors included 1) not feeling understood/no peer group/lack of support, 2) mental health issues/health issues, 3) family issues, 4) difficult transition, 5) education benefits issues/credit transfer difficulties, 6) Department of Veterans Affairs issues, and 7) deferred gratification. The operational definition of inhibitor is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that prevents or discourages the student veteran from completing the teacher education program and initial certification.

There were seven enablers that participants noted as helping them overcome inhibitors to completing a teacher education program and initial certification. These included 1) education benefits, 2) institutional enablers at the university, 3) good attitude/self-advocate, 4) information from military on education benefits, 6) Veterans Affairs office at the university, and 7) a peer group. The operational definition of enabler is any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that helps the student veteran overcome inhibitors and facilitates the completion of the teacher education program and initial certification.

Chapter five provides a review of the themes that emerged in the cross-case analysis. Implications of the current study are also explored. There are implications for veterans, teacher education programs, as well as for colleges and universities. In addition, limitations of the current study will be addressed and suggestions for further research will be provided.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

Today's military requires that servicemembers be technically trained and proficient, whether the veteran is in for four years or twenty (Yonkman & Bridgeland, 2009). The training received from the military does not always translate into a lucrative job when the veteran is discharged, however. Therefore, many veterans seek additional training or a college degree upon discharge in order to secure a better job. The education benefits available to veterans, such as the Montgomery GI Bill or Post-9/11 GI Bill as well as the Hazlewood Exemption for veterans joining from Texas, make it easier for veterans to attend college. Indeed, ACE (2008, 2009) insisted that more than 2 million veterans are coming home from wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and may be enrolling in America's colleges and universities as a result of education benefits such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

There is a perennial teacher shortage in the United States, with a steady flow of retiring baby boomers and specific areas of high need that must be filled (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Rockoff, 2004). The U.S. Department of Education (2011) reported that foreign language, bilingual education, mathematics, reading specialist, science, and special education are high-need fields in American education. Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom-era (OIF/OEF) veterans serve as a viable pool of prospective teachers to address the teacher shortage. According to Parker (1992) and Watt (1987), military veterans constitute a pool of potential teachers to help fill the projected shortage of teachers for years to come. Yonkman and Bridgeland (2009) noted

that "veterans are untapped national assets, having acquired experiences and skills while serving in the military that have significant value in the workplace and in communities" (p. 8). Research on military veterans becoming teachers indicated that veterans exhibit the characteristics sought in effective teachers and that they have good classroom management (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2005; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002).

Every veteran who serves and gets discharged under honorable conditions has education benefits, such as the GI Bill and/or the Hazlewood Exemption (from Texas only), that can be used to attend college and complete a teacher education program. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (2011a) reported that nonveterans had a higher completion rate than veterans from 2000-2009, when comparing Bachelor's Degrees. There are inhibitors that act in such a way as to keep veterans from completing a teacher education program, and enablers that help overcome the obstacles. OIF/OEF-era veterans serve as a potential pool of teacher candidates and have the skills and characteristics sought in teachers. Therefore, research to explore and explain the enablers and inhibitors for veterans to attend college and complete a teacher education program is necessary to address this problem.

Hawn (2011) noted that more research was needed to help bridge the gap between military and civilian higher education. Exploring which inhibitors affect veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification as well as the enablers that helped them overcome the obstacles contributes to the literature and can help colleges and universities support the enablers. This research seeks to find out if the enablers and inhibitors already identified in the literature are confirmed for OIF/OEF-era enlisted,

168

active duty veterans in a teacher education program, as well as discover any new ones to contribute to the literature.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The research question for this study is: What are the enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification in Texas using education benefits, such as the Montgomery GI Bill, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, or the Hazlewood Exemption, after serving on active duty? Research sub-questions are as follows:

1. What are the inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

2. What are the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

3. How can teacher education programs remove inhibitors for military veterans to complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

4. How can teacher education programs support the enablers that help military veterans complete a teacher education program and initial certification after serving on active duty?

5. Why are some veterans able to overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program and initial certification while others are not?

6. Why do some veterans have more enabling factors than others?

Each of these questions is aimed at understanding the experiences of student veterans enrolled in a teacher education program.

Cross-Case Analysis Themes

The cross-case analysis revealed several themes that are important for student veterans in a teacher education program as well as for teacher education programs,

169

colleges and universities, and even the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs. Why student veterans want to become a teacher is a strong enabler, followed by inhibitors and enablers for the participants in a teacher education program.

Why Become a Teacher

Each participant indicated that military experience contributed to his experience teaching as well as a desire to be a teacher, which speaks to the main research question, research sub-question 2, sub-question 5, and sub-question 6. The desire to become a teacher is an enabler to help student veterans overcome inhibitors to complete a teacher education program. This desire, if it is stronger in some student veterans than others, can also serve to explain why some veterans have more enabling factors than others, as asked in research sub-question 6.

This theme is significant, as it reveals that having experience as a Non-Commissioned Officer in the military can predispose a veteran to teaching. Research reveals that veterans who complete the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program make effective teachers with good classroom management (Bank, 2007; Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2009; Shaul, 2001; Willett, 2002); therefore, it is important to recruit teachers from this pool of OIF/OEF-era veteran candidates. In addition to having some experience teaching, each participant revealed a desire to make a difference or to influence young people's lives in some way, which is both commendable and what teacher educators want in a preservice teacher (Feistritzer, 2005; Owings et al., 2006). The desire to become a teacher is a powerful enabler that can stand to motivate student veterans to overcome inhibitors and complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification. Willett (2002) emphasized that "Our troops are accustomed to serving

170

their country and protecting the next generation, and their mission in the classroom is really no different" (p. 159).

Summary of Inhibitors

The cross-case analysis reveals seven inhibitors that participants experienced while enrolled in a teacher education program. Each inhibitor was reported by at least two of the participants. Selber et al. (2011) provided a useful framework for understanding inhibitors for veterans in college. They outlined several issues that veterans attending college face, which included 1) mental health/health/injury, 2) financial issues, 3) information/bureaucratic issues, 4) family responsibilities, and 5) other issues. Inhibitors that emerged from this research confirm some of the findings by Selber et al. (2011) but also included others. Emergent themes for inhibitors included:

1) not feeling understood/no peer group/lack of support (Rumann & Hamrick, 2010),

2) mental health/health issues (Bauman, 2009; Rumann & Hamrick, 2010; Selber et al., 2011),

3) family issues (ACE, 2009; Gwin, Selber et al., 2011),

4) difficult transition (ACE, 2009; DiRamio et al., 2008; Steele et al., 2010),

5) education benefits issues/credit transfer issues/VA office at the university (ACE, 2008; Murphy, 2011; Persky & Oliver, 2011; Steele et al., 2010; Williams & Pankowski, 1992),

6) Department of Veterans Affairs issues, and

7) deferred gratification (Gwin et al., 2012).

Throughout the study, the operational definition of inhibitor was any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that prevents or discourages the student veteran from completing the teacher education program and initial certification.

The minimum number of inhibitors experienced by any one participant was five, so it is likely that every OIF/OEF-era veteran attending college for teacher education will experience inhibitors in his or her time in the program. These themes respond to the main research question, research sub-question 1 and sub-question 4. No matter the institution, every student veteran felt not understood or a lack of support at some time during his time. In addition, every participant reported having family issues as well as a difficult transition upon getting out of the military and attending college in a teacher education program. The final inhibitor faced by each veteran encompasses bureaucratic/institutional inhibitors that cannot be addressed by anyone but the institution involved. Education benefits issues/credit transfer issues/VA office at the university were all inhibitors that were outside the control of the individual student veteran, but luckily, they were all areas in which either the VA or the college or university could make a difference.

Three of the participants were working through mental health/health issues as they continued in their respective teacher education programs, which can be a strong inhibitor depending on the extent of the individual case. Department of Veterans Affairs issues and deferred gratification were two themes that emerged for which one participant at each university site had experience with. Josh Delgado (ISU) and Eric Eastep (BU) both shared stories of problems, outside of education benefits, with the Department of Veterans Affairs that were acting or have acted as an inhibitor to completing or maintaining enrollment in a teacher education program. The prospect of deferred gratification was reported as an inhibitor by Randolfo Cano (ISU) and Eric Eastep (BU), because each felt that he had skills that were transferrable to a decent job without completing the teacher education program. Besides inhibitors, each participant had

experience with enablers that helped him to continue on in the teacher education program despite the inhibitors experienced or reported.

Summary of Enablers

There were seven enablers that participants noted as helping them overcome inhibitors to completing a teacher education program and initial certification. Like inhibitors, each enabler was reported by at least two participants, with four of the seven enabling all four participants to continue his teacher education program. Enablers include:

1) education benefits (Cook & Kim, 2009; Steele et al., 2010),

2) institutional enablers at the university (ACE, 2008; Selber et al., 2011),

3) good attitude/self-advocate (Murphy, 2011),

4) information from military on education benefits,

6) Veterans Affairs office at the university (ACE, 2008; Murphy, 2011), and

7) a peer group (ACE, 2008; Hollis, 2009; Persky & Oliver, 2011).

The operational definition of enabler was any material, psychological, structural, or institutional factor that helps the student veteran overcome inhibitors and facilitates the completion of the teacher education program and initial certification.

Of the seven enablers that emerged from the research, four were reported by all participants in the study. These emergent enabler themes answer research question 1, research sub-question 2, sub-question 4, and sub-question 5. They also spoke to research sub-question 6, helping to answer why some veterans have more enabling factors than others. Enablers included education benefits, institutional enablers at the university, a good attitude/self-advocate, and spouse or family support. These were each powerful

173

enablers in their own right that had the potential to help overcome a number of possible inhibitors. Eric Eastep (BU), Josh Delgado (ISU), and Randolfo Cano (ISU) each received enough information from the military on education benefits to act as an enabler for completing a teacher education program. Josh Delgado and Randolfo Cano, both at ISU, and with Alfred Long at BU, each declared that the VA office at the university was a strong enabler, as this office provided information, reminders, and other forms of communication that enabled the veteran to continue in the program. There were contradictory findings from participants at the Brooklake University sites, as Eric Eastep exclaimed that the VA office at the university was an inhibitor and Alfred Long found this same office to be an enabler. The final enabler was a peer group, which Randolfo Cano (ISU) and Alfred Long (BU) reported as an enabler, although Randolfo Cano's peer group was not at the university. These enablers were important for the student veteran participants, as they had the power to counteract one or more inhibitors and help keep the student veteran enrolled in a teacher education program and obtain initial certification. Interestingly, there was no direct relationship established in the interviews with participants between specific enablers and inhibitors.

Implications

This research serves to inform a wide range of individuals involved in the process of providing higher education to veterans. Veterans, teacher education programs, colleges and universities, and the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs can all learn from this research how to remove inhibitors as much as possible while at the same time encouraging enablers for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification.

174

These implications are rooted in the comprehensive data collected on these four cases of OIF/OEF-era veterans striving to complete a teacher education program at two public universities in Texas. They are offered as a focus point to inform future actions for veterans, schools of education, colleges and universities, and the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense to help these veterans, after a time serving their country in the military, to continue to serve the nation as effective and motivating teachers in America's classrooms. There are limitations to this research, which will be discussed later in the chapter, which are not all inclusive. However, the implications that are offered reveal significant data that has not appeared in the literature and confirms data that is in the literature.

Implications for Veterans

The implications for veterans are related to whether the student veteran is a self-advocate or has a good attitude, as noted in the enablers. Student veterans have the ability to help themselves as much or more than anyone else involved in their education. Veterans themselves, if made aware of some of the possible inhibitors they may face upon matriculating to college, can be proactive in enabling themselves to overcome such inhibitors. This speaks mainly to enablers to help veterans complete a teacher education program. Training in recognizing warning signs about depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), how and where to seek help is necessary for OIF/OEF-era veterans returning from one or several deployments (ACE, 2009; Hawn, 2011; Selber et al., 2011). Even if the veterans do not seek help themselves, providing such information is useful and has the potential to greatly help a number of veterans who have the self-awareness to recognize the signs and seek help. Veterans with such training can seek

175

help, which can also help deal with mental health issues or family issues, both inhibitors reported in this study.

If they want to feel understood, as many veterans do, student veterans can and should seek out a peer group to share experiences and issues with (ACE, 2008). It is often helpful to discuss issues and/or problems with someone who has similar experiences, and it is comforting to be around others with a similar background, especially when transitioning from the military to a college culture. Alfred Long insists that discussing problems with other veterans "helped significantly. It gave me a bit of a focus. Instead of having to deal with my own issues, I was able to help others and that, in turn, helped me" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). A peer group can be found on campus, if there is a veterans group (Selber et al., 2011), or off campus, such as at a VFW or other veterans group. Seeking out a peer group and getting involved can help alleviate not feeling understood, provide support for completing a teacher education program, as well as help the student veteran to overcome mental issues. Other inhibitors, such as family issues can also be reduced, which can have a corollary effect on a difficult transition by making it more bearable. If the peer group has veterans who are also attending college, this group can provide advice in dealing with education benefits issues, Department of Veterans Affairs issues, and can help advocate for incoming student veterans for the transfer of credits. Whether a student veteran seeks out a joins a peer group, if there is one on campus, as joining one will undoubtedly help the student veteran overcome inhibitors and may explain why some veterans—the ones most likely involved in the group—have more enabling factors than others.

Deferred gratification is another issue that the veteran must wrestle with on an individual basis. Trying to determine if the education sought is worth the time and resource commitment required is a difficult task. Randolfo Cano has a good plan for dealing with deferred gratification—finding a job during college at which the veteran can feel like he or she is contributing and being fully utilized. Finding a job like this can contribute to mental health, family issues, and problems with a difficult transition as well. Since the majority of veterans in today's military have training and experience in a wide variety of fields that make them employable in the civilian sector, finding a job where a veteran can utilize these skills is a way to deal with these inhibitors. Student veterans who are able to do this may have more enabling factors than others.

Using education benefits is one of the most powerful enablers available to veterans. Student veterans can utilize education benefits that they have earned as a result of service in the United States military by attending college. This means learning about education benefits available to veterans and the steps required to utilize the benefits. In addition to using education benefits, student veterans in teacher education programs can use the institutional enablers at the university, as Josh Delgado did.

> One thing I use everything—the benefits as far as campus—like the writing center, you know when you go to orientation they say "You are paying for this stuff so you might as well use it." The student instructors . . . I meet with people who can help me with my homework or help me with my test or whatever. So I use that as well. (personal communication, November 9, 2012)

This could mean attending a writing workshop, taking a study skills class, or any other program or aid offered not just to veterans, but to all students. This again speaks to some student veterans having more enabling factors than others.

Having a good attitude is more difficult for an individual student veteran to change, but entering a teacher education program with the correct mindset can help greatly with a good attitude. This means learning all the requirements and steps and asking questions of those in the department so there are few surprises along the way. Student veterans in a teacher education program can learn how to be a self-advocate, however. A peer group is one of the best ways for OIF/OEF-era veterans to learn to advocate for themselves, especially if there is a student veterans group on campus with other veterans who have similar experiences at that particular institution. Randolfo Cano expresses that "that fact that I had drill once a month really, really helped. So you could just talk to your guys and that was enough" (personal communication, November 9, 2012). In addition, a peer group can provide all sorts of support, advice, and even a listening ear for student veterans as they transition from the military to college (DiRamio et al., 2008; Gwin et al., 2012).

Healthy relationships are important for all college students, but may be even more important for student veterans in a teacher education program. In order to maintain spouse or family support, student veterans can work on dealing with mental health or health issues themselves and seek to resolve disputes, however difficult this may be. There are resources available through the VA and other veterans outreach groups to help attend to personal and marital problems. Utilizing these resources is key. Alfred Long found help in the student veterans group that he started at BU. Alfred shares that he "was able to help others and that, in turn, helped me" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). Having a group of peers to rely on as a sounding board and to discuss problems or

issues with is also important to help with spouse or family issues (DiRamio et al., 2008; Gwin et al., 2012).

There is little that student veterans can do about information from the military on education benefits or the VA office at the university. The best thing for all veterans to do is to listen attentively when information on education benefits is provided; however, this is difficult to do when there is no experience for the individual to attach such information. Therefore, the next best thing to do is to keep all the information in a file or on a computer so it is available at a later time. The VA office at the university exists to aid student veterans with education benefits and to ensure that student veterans are successful. Even if the VA office at the university is not helpful, a student veteran with a good attitude can advocate for better service and insist on services that are reasonable and that help veterans (Murphy, 2011). Eric Eastep describes his attitude:

> this is what I want, this is what I need, I am going to sit here. And I had no problem with just sitting, and waiting. It makes people mad, but just like "I will sit here. You will be ready in four hours? Okay." I sat there, got out a book, just sat there, and eventually they got tired of seeing me (personal communication, November 29, 2012).

A good attitude or the fact that the student veteran will advocate for him or herself is a strong enabler that can possibly counteract the power of a number of inhibitors. If the student veteran is informed, then he or she can learn to ask questions and seek help they need and deserve while they are students in college.

Implications for Teacher Education Programs

Teacher education programs are made up of individuals that care about education in general. As such, the individuals in teacher education programs can do a great deal to alleviate many of the pressures student veterans feel to leave college related to each of

179

the inhibitors identified. Student veterans deserve to have a fair shake at completing a teacher education program, and teacher education programs can help ease the process. Teacher education programs can remove inhibitors in a variety of ways that may overlap with college and university actions. Faculty and staff training can and should be provided on veterans, veteran's experiences, as well as how to recognize and help individuals with mental health issues to serve this growing population of college students (Persky & Oliver, 2011; Steele et al., 2010; Williams & Pankowski, 1992). Training on understanding veteran's experiences can be as simple as having a few currently enrolled or recently graduated student veterans come in and visit with the faculty and staff at a faculty meeting. In addition to helping faculty and staff understand student veterans, this will also help student veterans feel acknowledged and welcome at the university, which is an enabler. Working with other departments, such as Educational Psychology, Psychology, and/or Sociology to develop training, can provide the necessary information for individual faculty and staff members to recognize and be able to help student veterans with a wide range of needs. This will enable the professors and staff to be responsive and sensitive to veteran's needs as well as to help identify possible mental health issues that require professional treatment.

Faculty and staff, by being welcoming to student veterans, acknowledging their service, and seeking to understand them and their experiences can go a long way to alleviate issues that veterans have with not feeling understood or supported, mental health issues, or a difficult transition (Persky & Oliver, 2011). Eric Eastep's experience with the English Department at Brooklake University is indicative of this. "I had a degree plan—and basically the English Department did this for me—they brought my degree

plan over to the VA" (E. Eastep, personal communication, November 29, 2012). It is this type of understanding—that student veterans will have some unique needs and problems—that will help individuals and departments at colleges and universities be responsive and supportive of student veterans.

Individuals in teacher education programs can make veterans feel welcome by acknowledging student veterans' military service and that they have skills that can transfer to the classroom (Persky & Oliver, 2011). This is relatively easy for teacher education programs to do, as faculty just need to ask questions, listen to student veterans, and help make connections between military experiences and what occurs in a classroom. This may mean taking the time to talk to the individual student veteran outside of class to make sure he or she is comfortable talking about military service, or to simply get to know them better. Once a college student knows that a professor cares, they are much more likely to be open and honest when they do have issues or need help. Individuals in teacher education programs can help student veterans find jobs to help alleviate the inhibiting power of deferred gratification. In addition, individuals in teacher education programs can work to hire veterans and to be an advocate for student veterans on the university level, lending a voice to the needs of student veterans.

Implications for Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities can do a wide range of things to remove or soften the inhibitors as well as to encourage the enablers, beginning with setting to a goal to become and then doing the work required to become veteran-friendly (ACE, 2008; Hollis, 2009; Persky & Oliver, 2011). Irondale State University provides a great example of what

universities can do to help veterans deal with all of the inhibitors identified except

Department of Veterans Affairs issues reported by participants.

Irondale State University has a Veterans Advisory Council to identify gaps in

services and address them (Irondale State University, 2012c; White, 2011) as well as a

Veterans Alliance, which is a student organization linked with the national Student

Veterans of America organization (Irondale State University, 2012c). The mission

statement of the Veteran Alliance reads as follows:

> To ensure that veterans currently enrolled and veterans entering the university are
> aware of all organizations, services, and opportunities afforded to them. To
> establish a sense of pride in service, provide networking, and create a platform for
> which their voice may be heard. (Irondale State University, 2012e).

The Veterans Advisory Council was created in 2008 to include faculty and staff to

facilitate a smooth transition for student veterans at ISU (Irondale State University,

2012d). This council is there to address inhibitors and to enhance enablers, allowing

student veterans at this university to have more enabling factors than at other universities.

Asking student veterans how the university is doing in response to needs and services is a

powerful enabler that empowers student veterans, makes them feel valued and welcome,

and gives them a voice and a sense of ownership, all of which enables the student veteran

to overcome inhibitors.

The ISU web site offers a specific address for the Office of Veterans Affairs that

is university sponsored. The amount of information available for all student veterans on

this site is an enabler because the site goes above and beyond the required documents to

simply file for education benefits. The site contains numerous useful links for education

benefits such as the GI Bill and Hazlewood Exemption, scholarships, student resources,

and contacts. This is a wealth of information provided to student veterans that is extremely useful and educative.

Other types of support for student veterans at ISU includes veteran counselors or advisors on staff that coordinate activities with local veteran representatives for career placement, identify military dependents on campus, and child care facilities are available on campus (G.I. Jobs, 2013b). An advisor that assists veterans with career placement is also available, as is social events planned specifically for veterans, a student veterans group on campus, and a veteran-specific orientation and open house to assist with the transition to college from the military (G.I. Jobs, 2013b). These individuals, especially if they are veterans themselves, can really pave the way to success and remove inhibitors for student veterans if they are responsive and truly understand veterans' needs.

Veterans would like to feel validated, according to Persky and Oliver (2011), by being listened to by faculty, staff, and administrators in order to become aware of veterans' needs. Cook and Kim (2009) report that student veterans' want individuals at universities to listen and understand the unique circumstances and issues that veterans bring with them to college. This can be accomplished by taking the time to conduct focus groups with veterans to understand their needs and desires, as the services offered by universities do not always match needs of student veterans. Since the student population changes on a yearly basis, it would be extremely useful to conduct these focus groups annually. Not only would they give the administration and faculty a glimpse at the needs and desires of the current student veterans attending the college or university, but they would also validate veterans and help them feel acknowledged and valued. Alfred Long describes an instance of faculty or staff at Brooklake University taking time

to support and understand veterans. Alfred relates that he was trying "to get a decent student veterans organization going. We brought in speakers. [Betty Grable (pseudonym)] at [Brooklake] University was our sponsor and she was a big supporter and helped" veterans feel understood and respected on campus (personal communication, December 14, 2012). In addition, sources outside the university that can help with inhibitors should be made known and recommended by faculty and staff at the university and programs within the college or university can be asked to contribute to offering veterans services (Persky & Oliver, 2011).

A learning community, such as a student veterans group, is recommended by Persky and Oliver (2011) to make the transition easier for student veterans. Veterans are more comfortable around other veterans, even with the ribbing that often occurs between services, because the culture on a college campus is far more different than the slight differences evident between services. A veteran-specific orientation is recommended to help student veterans navigate the college or university bureaucracy (DiRamio et al., 2008; Gwin et al., 2012). As part of this veteran-specific orientation, it is recommended that transition coaches, to teach study skills, financial aid counseling, help with health care issues, and guide student veterans to counseling are assigned to help veterans be successful (Gwin et al.; Steele et al., 2010). This is a possibly powerful enabler that universities can set up to help student veterans make the transition and stay enrolled in a teacher education program. It would be very useful and help student veterans feel more understood if these coaches were also veterans who may be a year or two ahead of the incoming cohort of student veterans, as Alfred Long described (personal communication, December 14, 2012).

184

By making the college or university veteran-friendly, inhibitors will be reduced for student veterans and enablers will be increased (Hollis, 2009; Persky & Oliver, 2011). The model offered by Irondale State University can provide guidance for other universities. Professors must advocate for student veterans groups, utilize both university and community resources in helping student veterans with mental health issues and/or family issues, provide generous credit transfer policies for student veterans, and ensure that the VA office at the university is doing all it can to help OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete their program of study.

Implications for the Department of Defense and Department Veterans Affairs

The Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans are both federal agencies that deal with millions of people. However, this does not change the fact that there are actions that can and should be taken by individuals in these federal agencies to ensure that OIF/OEF-era veterans are able to separate from the military and be able to complete a teacher education program with the fewest inhibitors possible.

One of the most powerful ways to enable veterans to attend college and complete a teacher education program is for each military branch to continue to offer classes and information on education benefits that is required of all servicemembers. This research reveals that information from the military on education benefits is an enabler for veterans who matriculate to college upon discharge. In addition to classes, information must be handed out in hard copy form or provided electronically for veterans to reference when becoming a student. Randolfo Cano describes the wide range of methods used in these classes about education benefits:

I think the way they do it is pretty good. I think the PowerPoint is really great, it's very visual. And I think, not just the PowerPoint, and I know sometimes we have our NCO's teach classes, but I kind of really like it when they bring in people that, you know, know the benefits inside out. And they do that a lot, which I think is really effective. That and the packets that they kind of hit you multi; visually they got you, they're talking, auditory, and they give you the packets and have them. I think they're doing a really good job. (R. Cano, personal communication, November 9, 2012)

This information is an enabler for student veterans once they are in a teacher education program and can help overcome one or more inhibitors that are reported.

Once a veteran is discharged from the military, services provided to him or her are transferred from the Department of Defense to the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is imperative that the Department of Veterans Affairs work diligently to ensure that all education claims are handled in a prompt manner and that each student veteran receives the proper benefits. In addition to education benefits, mental health and health issues can and often are addressed by VA medical centers. The Department of Veterans Affairs has a chance today to ensure that OIF/OEF-era veterans are receiving prompt, attentive, and prompt medical care that addresses problems experienced by all veterans. By doing these things, the Department of Veterans Affairs can reduce inhibitors and increase enablers for student veterans to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification.

The implications of this research can have far-reaching and long-lasting effects by helping student veterans complete a teacher education program and helping our nations' schools and students by tapping a pool of potential teacher candidates that has a strong possibility for success in the classroom. Individual student veterans can be proactive in learning about the possible inhibitors, seek help for mental problems or issues, and seek out a peer group to share issues and experiences. To increase enablers, individual veterans can attend training to understand education benefits, cultivate health

186

relationships with family and peers, and use resources at the university to help him or her complete a teacher education program.

Teacher education programs can make an atmosphere that is warm and welcoming for student veterans, which can be aided by individuals in the program working to understand veterans and veterans' needs. To accomplish this, faculty and staff training can be provided on how to recognize and help individuals with mental health issues, and current student veterans can attend a training to explain the issues and problems that they face while enrolled in a teacher education program. Simply acknowledging veterans' military service and seeking to understand the skills veterans have obtained while in the military can greatly enable veterans to complete a teacher education program. Faculty and staff in teacher education programs can also be advocates for student veterans at the university level, seeking to help address student veteran's needs.

Colleges and universities have a tremendous opportunity to remove inhibitors and help provide enablers for student veterans to complete a teacher education program. Colleges and universities can offer a veteran-specific orientation and even offer transition coaches to help student veterans make the transition to college more manageable and help them complete college. A Veterans Advisory Council is a great way to learn about and address gaps in services at the university level. A veteran's group on campus is another way to remove inhibitors and increase enablers, especially if the group is linked with the national group, Student Veterans of America. A web site maintained by the VA office at the university that provides information, web links, scholarships, contacts, and forms that student veterans need is also an enabler for veterans. Veteran counselors and advisors on

staff to coordinate services, training, and activities for student veterans can be offered and supported by the college or university to enable all student veterans to complete college. Since each individual campus will have a unique mix of student veterans, conducting focus groups with current student veterans to understand their needs, provide services, and connect student veterans with outside services. All of these actions can combine to make colleges and universities veteran-friendly, reducing inhibitors and increasing enablers (Hollis, 2009; Persky & Oliver, 2011).

The Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs are two federal agencies that can take a few easy steps to help student veterans, in all majors, be successful in and complete college. Continuing training on military education benefits is a powerful way for the Department of Defense to help veterans make the transition and enable them to complete college. Providing this training in a variety of ways, such as personal classes, handouts, PowerPoints, and how and where to find the information on the web is necessary for veterans to make the decision to attend college. The Department of Veterans Affairs must also work diligently to ensure that all types of services that veterans are entitled to are provided in a timely and fair manner. This means ensuring that medical claims, benefits, and issues are addressed in a prompt manner and education benefits are provided without issues.

These implications of this research are crucial to helping veterans transition from the military to college and help veterans complete a teacher education program. The lessons learned from this study can apply to veterans, teacher education programs, colleges and universities, and even the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs. There are limitations to this research, of course, but these implications

are essential and can be implemented immediately to help veterans in an assortment of ways.

Limitations

Like any research study, this one has limitations. The fact that this is a qualitative multiple-case study means that there is going to be a small number of participants, but each participant will provide a rich description of experiences that is not available with a survey. A small number of participants makes it difficult to generalize from such a study. In addition to a small number of participants, only two sites were chosen to study, which also limits generalizability of findings. There is a benefit to a small number of participants, however, in that each case can be fully explored and a saturation of information was able to be obtained from each one. Time is another limitation on any study, as one must stop collecting data at the point of saturation, but if more time was available for the study, more sites and/or participants could be included in the study to make it more robust. This issue is an important issue and it is essential to get the findings and implications available to those who have the power to decrease inhibitors and increase enablers, which makes the time spent on the research very reasonable.

A very difficult limitation to overcome is that of access to veterans. The Department of Veterans Affairs is extremely protective of contact information for veterans. Universities often do not have information on who is a veteran unless they are using benefits. During the research, it was found that individual academic programs do not have any type of identifier for veterans, so all participants were located through the VA office at the university.

Finally, there are limitations on the amount of information that can be obtained through interviews, emails, and personal journals. Although the interviews were conducted with thoroughness and attentiveness, there are limits to how long a participant can talk or be available to answer questions. Each of the participants in the research was asked to complete a journal within twenty-four hours after the completion of the interview. Obtaining this information proved difficult, as each of the participants had to be gently reminded to complete the journal and Eric Eastep never did complete it. In fact, Eric Eastep dropped all contact following the personal interview, not providing any more information in the form of emails, phone calls, documents, or journals.

Even though there are limitations to this study, the research design was appropriate for the type of data collected (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2008). The multiple-case study design was chosen specifically because of the rich amount of information able to be obtained. Interviews and other forms of information collected from participants in the research were collected to the point of saturation, allowing the researcher to uncover, understand, and get follow-up evidence for themes that emerged as both inhibitors and enablers for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program. This research study was conducted in a thorough and ethical manner and the findings have been triangulated to assure they are valid and reliable. This research study findings can shape current actions by a number of individuals invested in and involved with educating OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program. In addition, these findings can influence future research related to OIF/OEF-era veterans in college.

Future Research

It is exciting because future research can be greatly informed by this study. More qualitative work would always add to the knowledge being constructed on this topic by providing rich, thick descriptions of experiences and how they relate to completing college in general. More research on the types of services that provided by colleges and universities and their effectiveness is also necessary. These types of research can address the limitation of few participants and sites and help determine if other universities and veterans are experiencing similar inhibitors and enablers.

The findings of this study can be used to inform a more generalizable quantitative questionnaire, whereas some of the inhibitors and enablers experienced can be better generalized to the veteran population in general. This would address the limitation of lack of generalizability with the qualitative multiple-case study and determine if the inhibitors and enablers are generalizable to other student veterans. It would be extremely useful to sample a group of veterans who either chose not to attend college at all or who did not finish a degree and find out the inhibitors that kept these individuals from finishing or attending. Future studies should be designed to distinguish whether enablers and inhibitors are unique to student veterans transitioning to college or whether these enablers and inhibitors also compare to the transition from the military to civilian status. There are currently no existing studies that have been able to sample this population, but it is a worthwhile and important endeavor to pursue.

Regardless, research should continue on this topic because there are so many OIF/OEF-era veterans in the United States today. These veterans have served in the military and have a right to the benefits earned as a result of this service. In addition to

making veterans' lives better, society will gain if we can put more veterans in classrooms across the nation, addressing the teacher shortage in America with high quality teachers who want to make a difference and work with young people (Feistritzer, 2005; Willett, 2002).

Final Remarks

OIF/OEF-era veterans serve as a viable source of future teachers to both fill the impending teacher shortage (McCree, 1993; Parker, 1992; Yonkman & Bridgeland, 2009) as well as to help veterans continue to contribute to society and serve in classrooms. Our nation's veterans deserve to have every opportunity to have a fulfilling and successful life upon leaving military service. Each one has earned it. Teacher education programs and colleges and universities have an amazing opportunity to help remove inhibitors and increase enablers for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program and obtain initial certification.

This research identified seven identified inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era veterans to complete a teacher education program, as well as seven enablers to help overcome inhibitors and continue attending college. Veterans can help themselves in respect to some inhibitors and enablers, but teacher education programs and colleges and universities have a role to play in removing inhibitors and increasing enablers. In addition, the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs have responsibilities to veterans and can also influence certain inhibitors and enablers. We owe it to OIF/OEF-era veterans to do all we can and society will benefit if these veterans are given a chance to make a successful teaching career after serving in the nation's military.

Alfred Long sums up what must be done when he describes contending with inhibitors while in the teacher education program. "Alright, to hell with this. I cannot do this alone. I am going to find other veterans and we are going to work it out together" (A. Long, personal communication, December 14, 2012). Every single person involved in education at the college level has a responsibility to provide the best and most appropriate education available to student veterans. Men and women have answered the call to serve in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom, and sometimes in both theaters of war. We owe it to these veterans to give them a way to use education benefits that they have earned and to help them overcome inhibitors to completing a college degree. We are sitting on a potential pool of effective teachers with good classroom management abilities and transferrable skills. It is admirable that these veterans have the desire to continue serving in our nation's schools, and we owe it to them to do our best to help make their dreams and aspirations a reality.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Informed Consent

Baylor University
Certification of Informed Consent
Principal Investigator: Brandon Moore

Brandon Moore is conducting a multiple-case study of enablers and inhibitors for OIF/OEF-era enlisted, active duty veterans enrolled in a teacher education program leading to initial certification, with one site a veteran-friendly university and the other one without such a designation. The results of this research will be shared with other educators as well as with policymakers to advise them of the enablers and inhibitors for completing a teacher education program as well as to inform policy to help more veterans utilize education benefits. This form asks for your consent to participate in three semi-structured interviews, which will require answering questions and sharing information, and will take approximately 45-75 minutes.

There will be no physical risks at any time. You should understand that your participation is completely voluntary. You can refuse to answer any question or stop the interview at any time without penalty. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefit.

Your answers will be kept confidential and your responses will not be linked to you personally; pseudonyms for all participants and sites will be used. All data collected will be completely confidential and anonymously coded to insure privacy of all participants. Names of participants will remain confidential and will not be cited in the study or possible future publications. To maintain confidentiality, the names listed on any papers or artifacts will be removed and coded. Pseudonyms will be used in any publications or presentations done in relation to the study. All data stored on the hard drive of the researcher's encrypted office computer at Baylor University and will be kept on an encrypted computer and only the researchers will have access to the data. Upon completion of the study the data my encrypted office computer will be kept for two years and then be destroyed. Print documents will be shredded and audio and electronic documents will be erased or deleted.

This study meets the American Psychological Association's standards for "Minimal Risk," and poses no major risks or dangers to you as a participant. The interviews will be transcribed and evaluated in the coming months, and will be available for you to review, should you wish to see the outcome.

Please direct all inquiries to Brandon Moore, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Baylor University, Box 97134, Waco, TX, 76798; 254-744-5462; Brandon_Moore@Baylor.edu or Dr. Tony Talbert, Advisor, School of Education, Baylor

University, Box 97314, Waco, TX, 76798-7314; 254-710-7417;
Tony_Talbert@baylor.edu

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant or any other aspect of the research as it relates to you as a participant, please contact the Baylor University Committee for Protection of Human Subjects in Research IRB Chair: Dr. David W. Schlueter, Ph.D., Chair Baylor IRB, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97368 Waco, TX 76798-7368. Dr. Schlueter may also be reached at (254) 710-6920 or (254) 710-3708.

A copy of the signed consent form will be given to you for your records. I have read and understand this form, am aware of my rights as a participant, and have agreed to participate in this research.

_____   _____   _____

Name (Print)   Signature   Date

APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol

Veterans as teachers? A qualitative study of the inhibitors and enabling factors for

veterans to complete a traditional teacher education program and initial certification.

Principal Investigator: Brandon Moore

Interview protocol

Interview 1: Life history in light of military service and attending college to pursue teacher certification

1. What is your age?

2. What is your race?

3. What is your gender?

4. Why did you join the military? (Please share all the reasons that were considered)

5. What date did you join the military?

6. What date did you separate or get discharged from the military?

7. What branch of service did you serve in?

8. What was your family structure while you were in high school?

    a. Parental marital status?

    b. Siblings and family order?

9. What is the highest level of education your mother completed?

10. What is the highest level of education your father completed?

11. What was your first language at home?

12. What were your parent's aspirations for you after high school?

13. What was your high school experience like for you?

    a. Did you enjoy school? Did you go to class all the time? What did you

    like/not like?

14. What is your highest level of education completed?

15. What type of formal education did you attain while in the military?

    a. Informal or job training?

16. What type of job did you do in the military?

17. Why did you decide to become a teacher? (Please list all the reasons)

18. How did your previous school experience affect your decision to become a teacher?

19. How did your military experience affect your decision to become a teacher?

20. What other factors were important in you making the decision to become a teacher?

Interview 2: Enablers and inhibitors for completing teacher education program and initial certification

21. What were the factors that discouraged you from attending college using education

    benefits, such as the GI Bill or the Hazlewood Exemption?

    a. How did you counter the negative factors?

    b. Were there other reasons that enabled you to attend college or inhibited you

    from attending college?

22. What information did you have about the GI Bill and the Hazlewood Exemption

    when you separated from military service?

23. What were the steps you would had to go through to initiate and use the benefits of

    the GI Bill and/or the Hazlewood Exemption?

24. Did you know what steps you needed to take to enter college, register, and get

    financial aid when you separated from the military?

25. How old were you when you separated from military service?

26. Were you married when you separated from military service?

    a. If so, did you remain married after your discharge?

        i. If not, how long after your discharge were you separated/divorced?

27. Did you have children when you separated from military service?

    a. If so, how old were they when you were discharged?

28. Please describe your transition from military to civilian life. Were there any difficulties? (i.e. family responsibilities, mental health/health/injury issues)

    a. If so, please describe them.

29. What type of support did you have during your transition and after your discharge (i.e. family, spouse, clergy, other)?

30. What factors allowed you to overcome each of the individual inhibitors that you encountered? (Please be specific)

    a. Institutional

    b. Personal

    c. Other

Journal Reflections: Meaning of experiences

31. It is important for me to understand how you are processing the interviews, so please reflect on the meaning of the experiences you have had as well as any part of the interview. Within 24 hours of each interview, please reflect on the interview, to include questions asked or not asked, answers provided, or anything else you find important regarding the discussion we had that day. You can amend any answer you provided or add any information you believe you may have forgotten. The following

questions can be used as a prompt for journal reflections: 1) What insights, feelings, or ideas have you had regarding our discussion today? 2) What else would you tell me if you could? 3) Now that you have had some time to process the experience, is there anything else that comes to mind that you did not think of during the interview? Please email these reflections to me at Brandon_Moore@Baylor.edu as soon as they are complete. Thank you very much.

APPENDIX C

Brooklake University Letter of Cooperation

Office: _____ ████████████████████████████████

Person filling out form (name/title): ████████████████████████

Contact Information: _____ ████████████████████████████

_____

Date:

Dear Brandon Moore,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled "Veterans as teachers? A qualitative study of the inhibitors and enabling factors for OIF/OEF-era active duty veterans to complete a traditional teacher education program and initial certification using military educational benefits" within ██████████

As part of this study, I authorize you to recruit participants, collect data, member check during data analysis, and disseminate the results of the research. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include helping to recruit participants. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Baylor University Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,

Signature of authorization official ████████████████

Printed name of authorization official: ████████████████

Contact information: ████████████████████████████

APPENDIX D

Irondale State University Letter of Cooperation

▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Office: ▮▮▮▮▮

Person filling out form (name/title): ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Contact Information: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Date: 9/27/12

Dear Brandon Moore,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled "Veterans as teachers? A qualitative study of the inhibitors and enabling factors for OIF/OEF-era active duty veterans to complete a traditional teacher education program and initial certification using military educational benefits" within ▮▮▮▮▮▮

As part of this study, I authorize you to recruit participants, collect data, member check during data analysis, and disseminate the results of the research. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include helping to recruit participants. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Baylor University Institutional Review Board.

Sincerely,

Signature of authorization official: ▮▮▮▮

Printed name of authorization official: ▮▮▮▮

Contact information: ▮▮▮▮

APPENDIX E

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

BAYLOR
UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

One Bear Place #97310 Waco, TX 76798-7310 • (254) 710-3763 • FAX (254) 710-7309 • WEBSITE: www.baylor.edu/research/irb

DATE: October 19, 2012

TO: Brandon Moore
FROM: Baylor University Institutional Review Board

STUDY TITLE: [385448-1] Veterans as teachers? A qualitative study of the inhibitors and
                                enabling factors for veterans to complete a traditional teacher education
                                program and initial certification.
IRB REFERENCE #:
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: October 19, 2012
EXPIRATION DATE: October 19, 2013
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category 6

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. Baylor University
Institutional Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate
risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be
conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and
insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must
continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal
regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to
initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the
appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should
also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use
the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact David Schlueter at (254) 710-6920 or david_schlueter@baylor.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

Sincerely,

█████████████████████

David W. Schlueter, Ph.D.
Chair, Baylor IRB

cc:

Generated on IRBNet

REFERENCES

"23rd Cardinal Command". (2013). Retrieved from https://orgsync.com/42213/chapter

American Council on Education. (2008). *Serving those who serve: Higher education and America's veterans*. Retrieved from http://www.acenet.edu/Content/ NavigationMenu/ProgramsServices/MilitaryPrograms/serving/Veterans_Issue_Br ief_1108.pdf

American Council on Education. (2009). *Military service members and veterans in higher education: What the new GI bill may mean for postsecondary institutions.* Retrieved from http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ ProgramsServices/CPA/ Publications/MilService.errata.pdf

Angrist, J. D., & Chen, S. H. (2011). Schooling and the Vietnam-era GI Bill: Evidence from the draft lottery. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 3*(2), 96-118.

Bank, D. (2007). Boots on the ground: An innovative federal project turns retiring military personnel into teachers. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*.

Bauman, M. C. (2009). Called to serve: The military mobilization of undergraduates. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations and Theses. (3380873).

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods*. (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Brooklake University. (2013a). About BU. Retrieved from http://www.brooklake.edu/ about-lu/index.html

Brooklake University. (2013b). College of Education and Human Development. Retrieved from http://education.brooklake.edu/index.html

Brooklake University. (2013c). Veterans Affairs. Retrieved from http://dept.brooklake. edu/records/veterans.htm

Brown, P. A., & Gross, C. (2011). Serving those who have served: Managing veteran and military student best practices. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education, 59*(1), 45-49. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. EJ915954).

Cappex: College Search Made Simple. (2013). Colleges in Texas. Retrieved from http:// www.cappex.com/colleges/states/Texas

Chapman, L. A. (1983). Personal and academic characteristics of GI Bill recipients. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations and Theses. (8323738).

Clifford, G. J. (1989). Man/Woman/Teacher: Gender, family and career in American educational history. In D. Warren (Ed.), *American teachers: Histories of a profession at work* (pp. 293-343). New York: Macmillan.

College for all Texans. (2012). "Exemptions for Texas veterans (Hazlewood exemption). Retrieved from http://www.collegefortexans.com/apps/financialaid/tofa2.cfm?ID=579

Cook, B. J., & Kim, Y. (2009). *From soldier to student: Easing the transition of service members on campus*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2010). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DiRamio, D., Ackerman, R., & Mitchell, R. L. (2008). From combat to campus: Voices of student-veterans. *NASPA Journal, 45*(1), 73-102.

Feistritzer, C. E., Hill, M. D., & Willett, G. G. (1998). *Profile of troops to teachers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Information.

Feistritzer, C. E. (2005). *Profile of troops to teachers*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Information.

G.I. Jobs (2012a). Brooklake University. Retrieved from http://www.militaryfriendlyschools.com/search/profile.aspx?id=226091&year=2013

G.I. Jobs. (2013b). Irondale State University. Retrieved from http://www.militaryfriendlyschools.com/search/profile.aspx?id=228459&year=2013

G.I. Jobs. (2013c). Military friendly schools: Texas. Retrieved from http://www.militaryfriendlyschools.com/search/results.aspx?pg=1

Gwin, D. M., Selber, K., Chavkin, N., & Williams, A. (2011). Supporting the next surge: Helping veterans transition to higher education. *The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education,* 14(3), page numbers to be determined (in press).

Hancock, D. R., & Algozzine, B. (2006). *Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in educational settings.* New York: State University of New York Press.

Haveman, R., & Smeeding, T. (2006). The role of higher education in social mobility. *Future of Children, 16*(2), 125-150.

Hawn, H. (2011). Veterans and veteran families in general education. *Journal of General Education, 60*(4), 248-264. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. EJ956194).

Hogan, P. F., & Seifert, R. F. (2010). Marriage and the military: Evidence that those who serve marry earlier and divorce earlier. *Armed Forces & Society, 36*(3), 420-438.

Hollis, M. J. (2009). Breaking down cultural barriers to military entry into higher education. A comprehensive examination paper for advancement to doctoral candidacy in the college of education, Texas State University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED511502).

Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1994). Data management and analysis methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.) (pp. 428-444). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ingersoll, R. M. (2003). Is there really a teacher shortage? A research report co-sponsored by Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy and The Consortium for Policy Research in Education. Document R-03-4.

Irondale State University. (2012a). About Irondale State. Retrieved from http://www.txstate.edu/about/index.html

Irondale State University. (2012b). College of education. Retrieved from http://www.education.idstate.edu/about.html

Irondale State University. (2012c). Division of academic affairs: Veterans Affairs. Retrieved from http://www.va.idstate.edu/

Irondale State University. (2012d). Veterans advisory council. Retrieved from http://www.va.idstate.edu/Resources/Vet-Adv-Council.html

Irondale State University. (2012e). Veteran alliance at Irondale State. Retrieved from http://www.va.idstate.edu/Resources/Student-Vet-Alliance.html

Kiester, E., Jr. (1994). The G.I. Bill may be the best deal ever made by Uncle Sam. *Smithsonian, 25*(8), 128-139.

Kilburn, M. R., & Klerman, J. A. (1999). *Enlistment decisions in the 1990s: Evidence from individual-level data*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND

Kreisher, O. (2010). GI bill, sagging economy boost military recruiting. *Congress Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/1010/101310cdam1.htm

LaBarre, A. A. (1985). *Veterans as students: A review of the literature*. Unpublished manuscript. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED263319).

Lay, R. (2009). Applying the combinatorial retention auction mechanism (CRAM) to a cost-benefit analysis of the post 9/11 GI era GI bill transferability benefit. Unpublished master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA.

Lundquist, J. H. (2007). A comparison of civilian and enlisted divorce rates during the early all volunteer force era. *Journal of Political and Military Sociology, 35*(2), 199-217.

McCree, H. (1993). Post-career military as an alternative pool of teacher candidates. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association. New Orleans, LA. Nov. 10-12, 1993. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED383666).

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods,* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Military.com (n.d.). "10 steps to joining the military. Step 2: Decide if you're ready." Retrieved from http://www.military.com/Recruiting/Content/0,13898,rec_step02_reasons,,00.html

Militaryspot.com (2011). "Joining the military: Reasons for joining." Retrieved from http://www.militaryspot.com/enlist/joining_the_military/

Moynahan, M. A. (2009). Hazlewood Act Facts. *Texas Online Veterans Portal E-Newsletter, 8*(9), p. 1.

Murphy, M. P. (2011). Military veterans and college success: A qualitative examination of veteran needs in higher education. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations and Theses. (3490565).

Nunnery, J. A., Owings, W. A., Kaplan, L. S. & Pribesh, S. (2009). The effects of troops-to-teachers on student achievement: One state's study. *NASSP Bulletin, 93*(4), 249-272. DOI: 10.1177/0192636509359338

Olson, K. W. (1973). The G.I. Bill and higher education: Success and surprise. *American Quarterly, 25*(5), 596-610.

Owings, W. A., Kaplan, L. S., Nunnery, J., Marzano, R., Myran, S., & Blackburn, D. (2005). Supervisor perceptions of the quality of troops to teachers program completers and program completer perceptions of their preparation to teach: A national survey. Norfolk, VA: Old Dominion University College of Education.

Owings, W. A., Kaplan, L. S., Nunnery, J., Marzano, R., Myran, S., & Blackburn, D. (2006). Teacher quality and troops to teachers: A national study with implications for principals. *NASSP Bulletin, 90*(2), 102-131.

Parker, W. (1992). An evaluation of the performance of retired military personnel who begin teaching as a second career. An unpublished dissertation completed at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.

Pavelek, M. (2011). 10 reasons to pick a military friendly school. *GIJobs.com.* Retrieved from http://www.gijobs.com/10-reasons-to-pick-a-mfs.aspx

Persky, K. R., & Oliver, D. E. (2011). Veterans coming home to the community college: Linking research to practice. *Community College Journal of Research, 35*(1-2), 111-120. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. EJ908769).

Rockoff, J. E. (2004). The impact of individual teachers on student achievement: Evidence from panel data. *American Economic Review*, *94*, 247-252.

Rumann, C. B. (2010). Student veterans returning to a community college: Understanding their transitions. (Doctoral Thesis). Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations and Theses. (3403830).

Rumann, C. B., & Hamrick, F. A. (2009). Supporting student veterans in transition. *New Directions for Student Services, 126*, 25-34.

Rumann, C. B., & Hamrick, F. A. (2010). Student veterans in transition: Re-enrolling after war zone deployments. *The Journal of Higher Education, 81*(4), 431-458.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research*. (3rd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Selber, K., Miller, M. & Chapman, E. (2011, September 30). Creating support services for at-risk student veterans. Presentation at the Texas A&M System Conference.

Shaul, M. E. (2001). Troops to teachers: Program helped address teacher shortages. Report to Congressional Requestors. Washington, DC: General Accounting Office.

Spaulding, D. J. (2000). The four major GI Bills: A historical study of shifting national purposes and the accompanying changes in economic value to veterans. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations and Theses. (3065737).

Stanley, M. (2003). College education and the midcentury GI Bills. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 118*(2), p. 671-708.

Steele, J. L., Salcedo, N., & Coley, J. (2010). *Service members in school: Military veterans' experiences using the GI Bill and pursuing postsecondary education.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

Stidd, M. (2012, February 8). Why encouraging veterans to transition to teaching careers is a benefit to all. Retrieved from http://www.leg.state.or.us/committees/ exhib2web/2012reg/HVETS/02-13-2012meetingmaterials/hb4063repparrish02-13-2012.pdf

Taniguchi, H, & Kaufman, G. (2005). Degree completion among nontraditional college students. *Social Science Quarterly, 86*(4), 912-927.

Texas Administrative Code §228.35. (2012). Requirements for educator preparation programs. Retrieved from http://info.sos.state.tx.us/pls/pub/

The Free Dictionary. (2012a). "Discharge." Retrieved from http://www.thefreedictionary. com/discharged

The Free Dictionary. (2012b). "Enable." Retrieved from http://www.thefreedictionary. com/enable

The Free Dictionary. (2012c). "Inhibit." Retrieved from http://www.thefreedictionary. com/inhibit

The Free Dictionary. (2012d). "Serviceman." Retrieved from http://www. thefreedictionary.com/serviceman

 "The GI BILL's History." (n.d.). Born of controversy: The GI Bill of Rights. Retrieved from http://www.gibill.va.gov/benefits/history_timeline/index.html

Thomas, M. C. (2009). Evolution of the G.I. Bill and other education benefits in the armed forces and their impact on recruitment and retention. (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. http://udini. proquest.com/view/evolution-of-the-gi-bill-and-other-pqid:1864966591/

"Troops to Teachers". (2012, July 23). Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support. Retrieved from http://www.dantes.doded.mil/Sub%20Pages/TTT/ Docs/Eligibility_ Criteria.pdf

U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. (2007). Table 1: Annual estimates of the population for the United States, regions, states, and Puerto Rico: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007 (NST-EST2007-01). *National and State Population Estimates*. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/popest/states/NST-ann-est2007.html

U.S. Department of Education. (2011). Teacher shortage areas nationwide listing: 1990-91 thru 2011-12. Washington, DC: Office of Postsecondary Education.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2007). *Table 1L: Veterans by state, age group, period, gender, 2000–2036.* Vetpop 2007 State Tables. Retrieved from www.va.gov/VETDATA/ docs/Demographics/1l.xls

U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2008). *The post-9/11 veterans educational assistance act of 2008*. VA Pamphlet 22-09-1. Retrieved from http://www. gibill.va.gov/pamphlets/ ch33/ch33_pamphlet.pdfCH30_Pamphlet.pdf

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2010). *State summary: Texas and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*. Washington, DC: Office of Public Affairs Media Relations.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2011a). *Educational attainment of veterans: 2000 to 2009*. Washington, DC: National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/ education_FINAL.pdf

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2011b). Eligibility for OIF/OEF veterans. Retrieved from https://iris.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/866/kw/oif

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2011c). *Profile of veterans: 2009. Data from the American Community Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/ SpecialReports/Profile_of_Veterans_2009_FINAL.pdf

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. (2012). *The post-9/11 GI-Bill*. Washington, DC: Veterans Benefits Administration. Retrieved from http://www.gibill.va.gov/ benefits/ post_911_gibill/index.html

U.S. News & World Report (2013a). Colleges: Brooklake University. Retrieved from http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/brooklake-university-3581

U.S. News & World Report (2013b). Colleges: Irondale State University-San Marcos. Retrieved from http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/texas-state-university-3615

Watt, D. (1987). Selected military attitudes toward a career in teaching: A potential source of teacher candidates. A paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, Mobile, AL. Nov. 11-13, 1987.

White, A. (2011, Sept. 11). "With boom of student veterans, colleges race to provide services. Statesman.com. Retrieved from http://www.statesman.com/news/news/local/with-boom-of-student-veterans-colleges-race-to-pro/nRfQD/

Willett, G. G. (2002). Troops to teachers: A profile of education in action. Olympia, WA. Retrieved from http://assets.pearsonschool.com/asset_mgr/legacy/200727/2002_15Willett_483_1.pdf

Williams, V. & Pankowski, M. (1992). The military's challenge to continuing higher education. *Journal of Continuing Higher Education, 40*(2), 26-29.

Yin, R. K. (2008). *Case study research: Design and methods*. (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Yonkman, M. M. & Bridgeland, J. M. (2009). *All volunteer force: From military to civilian service*. Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises.