



The State University of New York  
Student Assembly

**1617-FC13**  
**Webster**

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**MEMORANDUM 1617-FC13**

**TO: Members of the Student Assembly**

**FROM: Jake Webster, Chair of the Military Affairs Committee**

**ENDORSED BY: Military Affairs Committee, Rules Committee**

**DATE: April 7, 2017**

**SUBJECT: Standardization of the Term “Veteran”**

**Action Requested**

I recommend that the Student Assembly of the State University of New York (SUNY SA) adopt the following resolution to standardize the classification of the term “Veteran” across all SUNY campuses to the definition and standards presented in the following resolution.

**Resolution**

Whereas the State University of New York’s (SUNY) institutions enroll approximately 600,000 students across all sixty-four campuses; and

Whereas SUNY SA works to promote the diverse groups bodies of students within SUNY in the creation of an equitable university experience; and

Whereas SUNY administration and coordinators present SUNY as a push for students of all backgrounds and educations to be provided educational rights and confidence in their pursuit of future careers in their respective fields; and

Whereas the diversity of students is placed in the confidences of experienced professional educators that represent the efforts of SUNY administrators and Diversity Officers to pursue equality in learning; and

Whereas Veterans are classified as a diverse group of Students, Professors, Facilitators, Staff, and those who represent other roles within their respective SUNY institution; and

Whereas many Veteran students originate from non-traditional backgrounds, providing them with unique perspectives as successful SUNY students, under the circumstances of age, status of their dependents, or a delayed start to their education; and

Whereas SUNY administrators recognize the crucial role Student Veterans and other parties that have the potential to be Veterans by providing students with recognition through scholarships, grants, and other benefits; and

Whereas Student Veterans within SUNY are granted the opportunity to encourage their inclusive roles on campuses through proactive Student Veteran Organizations, Clubs, and other collaborations between students and staff; and

Whereas SUNY SA promotes the inclusion and importance of Student Veteran voices with the assistance of the current Chair, Voting Members, and other participants within the SUNY Student Assembly Military Affairs Committee, of which have drafted and approved of this resolution; and

Whereas Students that have worked within the primary five branches may not necessarily wish to define themselves as veterans, with them and other unidentified students not receiving the benefits promised to Student Veterans as a result of no general definition of what SUNY believes to be Veterans; and

Whereas the Federal definition of what classifies as a Veteran is the following: “men and women who have served (even for a short time), but are not currently serving, on active duty in the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or the Coast Guard, or who served in the U.S. Merchant Marine during World War II”<sup>1</sup>; and

Whereas this definition as followed by the State of New York does not provide paralleled scholarships, grants, and other benefits to those serving as Reservists, Guard, those who could define themselves as veterans but do not, and other positions previously acknowledged; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that SUNY SA recognizes the purpose of a standardized term to represent Student Veterans and their counterpart military members across all sixty-four SUNY campuses within New York State; and be it further

Resolved that SUNY SA recommends and supports the involvement of SUNY System Administration in the representation of a diverse group of people that would further benefit from a standardization of the term “Veteran” according to SUNY, in reference to and in compliance of Federal and State definitions, rules, and policies; and be it further

Resolved that SUNY SA suggests that the SUNY System Administration, Diversity Officers across all SUNY campuses, and other willing parties establish a standardized use of the term “Veteran” in the hopes of providing clarity, preventing misinterpretations of diversity practices, and to ensure the protection of Student Veterans that continue to pursue their educations; and be it finally

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.census.gov/hhes/veterans/about/definitions.html>

Resolved that copies of this resolution be distributed to the SUNY Board of Trustees, Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher, Presidents and Chief Academic Officers of State-Operated and Community Colleges, Diversity Officers and Coordinators of all SUNY institutions, and SUNY Student Government Presidents.