



2012 UWRF Family Member/Dependent of Service Member or Veteran Survey Summary

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We would like to thank Nicole Lillis for her assistance throughout the survey process. Finally, we thank the UWRF students who took the time to complete the survey.

Survey Summary

In February and March 2012, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls contacted 513 UWRF family members or dependents of service members or veterans by email and invited them to participate in an online survey. The survey was designed to measure the level of satisfaction with services provided to UWRF family members/dependents of service members and veterans as well as the levels of satisfaction with these services. The SRC produced this summary of the survey results.

Of the 513 invited recipients, a total of 80 people accessed the survey and 53 provided useable results (some clicked on the survey link but did not provide enough or any information). This summary is based on responses from 10% of those invited to participate in the survey. Based on a total population of 513, the estimates provided in this summary are expected to be accurate to within plus or minus 12.8% with 95 percent confidence. *Due to the low response and limited data provided, survey analysis was not completed for the survey.*

- Approximately one-half of respondents have “no opinion” about the effectiveness of UWRF’s outreach for family members and dependents of service members and veterans in helping the transition to university life. *Comments provided by the respondents suggest that many are unaware of services available to them, or if they are eligible for such services.*
- 70 percent or more of respondents rate their experiences with UWRF admissions, bursar, and staff and faculty support as very good or good.
- Career services/planning is the only service for which a majority of survey respondents consider “very important” to their particular situation on campus. Academic support/tutoring and financial aid counseling have approximately one-half of respondents saying these services are “very important.”
- 15 percent of respondents are experiencing difficulties that may cause them to stop attending UWRF.
- About 4 in 10 respondents could use or could have used additional financial management assistance when they were making the transition to university life.
- One in four respondents says that a family member has been activated within the last 5 years.
- Most survey respondents are full-time students (88%), three in five are 18 – 22 years of age, most are female (87%), and approximately three-fourths are single.
- Respondents fund their education through a variety of sources: loans (77%), employment (66%), grants (40%), scholarships (38%), family (34%), WI G.I. Bill (8%), VA Educational Benefits/Chapter 33 (6%), Chapter 35 (4%), and other sources (6%).
- Approximately two-thirds of respondents believe it is “very important” (21%) or “somewhat important” that an organization be formed on the UWRF campus that would specifically address the needs of family members or dependents of service members or veterans.

**UWRF Family Member/Dependent of Service Member or Veteran Survey Summary
April 2012**

Based on 53 usable responses

1. Where do you go for information about services and education benefits to which you are entitled as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran? **Mark all that apply.**

- 38% UWRF Veterans' Services Office
- 30% Family member's/Spouse's Military Unit/Education Officer
- 15% U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs
- 11% County Veterans Services Office
- 6% American Legion Veterans Services Office
- 23% *Other, See Appendix A*

2. Are there other off-campus resources, support services, or organizations you or your family currently use, or have used, specifically due to your status as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran (*e.g., Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Program in Minnesota*). **See Appendix A**

3. Please rate your experience with each of these UWRF resources/services:

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
Academic advising	30%	30%	25%	0%	2%	13%
Staff and faculty support	25%	47%	9%	2%	0%	17%
Admissions - application and transfer	21%	55%	11%	2%	0%	11%
Registrar services/enrollment verification	21%	45%	19%	0%	2%	13%
Bursar/billing/tuition payment	19%	51%	19%	4%	2%	6%
Financial aid	17%	28%	30%	8%	4%	13%
First-year experience	12%	46%	21%	0%	4%	17%
Career services	11%	43%	17%	0%	0%	28%
Student affairs/student services	9%	47%	11%	0%	0%	32%
Academic success center	8%	38%	11%	0%	2%	42%
Student health services	8%	30%	11%	0%	0%	51%
Counseling services	4%	19%	9%	2%	0%	66%
Veterans' Services Office	4%	21%	12%	0%	0%	63%

4. Please provide recommendations of how the UWRF resources/services for which you rated **poor** or **very poor** in the previous question could improve. **See Appendix A**

5. Has there been a member(s) of the UWRF campus community who has been particularly helpful to you as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran? If so, please provide their name and a brief description of their assistance: **See Appendix A**

6. Please choose the response that best represents your opinion as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran to the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
I feel connected with other UWRF students	17%	45%	13%	6%	19%
My transition to college has been made easier by the assistance provided to me by UWRF personnel	13%	45%	9%	2%	30%
I know where to go on campus if I have questions regarding veterans services/benefits	8%	28%	28%	15%	21%
UWRF has qualified staff trained to address family members or dependents of service members/veterans needs	6%	34%	2%	4%	55%
I have understood the paperwork associated with VA education benefits (Chapter 33, Chapter 35, etc.)	4%	19%	17%	17%	43%
I have experienced delays in receiving VA education benefits	2%	6%	8%	8%	77%
I have understood the paperwork associated with WI GI Bill education benefits	2%	15%	15%	17%	51%
I have experienced delays in receiving WI GI Bill education benefits	2%	2%	2%	9%	85%
I have had difficulty in finding adequate housing while attending UWRF	2%	8%	28%	26%	36%

7. As a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran, please rate the level of importance you place on the following services as they apply to your particular situation.

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Unsure
Career services/planning	57%	34%	8%	2%
Academic support/tutoring	47%	42%	9%	2%
Financial aid counseling	47%	38%	9%	6%
Healthcare services	30%	28%	30%	11%
Individual personal counseling or mental health services	26%	38%	26%	9%
Social activities and events	26%	47%	25%	2%
Student-veteran/dependent lounge or gathering place	20%	31%	22%	27%
Disability services/support	17%	23%	47%	13%
Veterans services/benefits counseling	17%	23%	33%	27%
Support groups and/or clubs specifically for service members and veteran students	15%	23%	38%	25%
Support groups and/or clubs specifically for family members or dependents of service members and veterans	8%	29%	40%	23%
<i>Other, See Appendix A</i>	6%	6%	17%	72%

8. Are you experiencing any difficulties that may cause you to stop attending UWRF?

15% Yes

85% No

8a. If yes, please describe the difficulties that may cause you to stop attending UWRF: **See Appendix A**

9. How effective, overall, do you think UWRF's outreach for family members and dependents of service members and veterans was in helping your transition to university life?

2% Very Effective

13% Effective

21% Somewhat Effective

6% Somewhat Ineffective

2% Ineffective

9% Very Ineffective

47% No Opinion

10. Please identify areas where you could use or could have used additional assistance in making the transition to university life. **Mark all that apply.**

- 43% Financial management
- 26% Time management assistance
- 25% Assistance connecting to campus life/organizations
- 23% Assistance connecting to other family members or dependents of service members/veterans
- 21% Assistance with academics
- 11% Medical care
- 6% Marriage/family issues
- 2% Child-care assistance
- 0% Spiritual issues
- 6% *Other, See Appendix A*

11. What **ONE THING** could UWRF do to provide better service for you as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran at UWRF? **See Appendix A**

All personal and individual information will remain confidential and will be reported in group form only.

12. Has a family member been activated within the last five years?

- 25% Yes
- 75% No

12a. If a family member has been activated within the last five years, which branch of service?

- 54% Army
- 46% Air Force
- 0% Coast Guard
- 0% Marines
- 0% Navy
- 0% *Other*

13. My academic status is:

- 88% Full-Time Student
- 8% Part-Time Student
- 0% Recently Graduated
- 0% Currently on Leave from School
- 4% *Other, See Appendix A*

14. The following best represents my class standing:

- 28% Freshman (less than 30 credits)
- 21% Sophomore (30 - 59 credits)
- 26% Junior (60 - 89 credits)
- 11% Senior (90+ credits)
- 11% Graduate Student
- 2% Continuing Education

15. Age:

- 60% 18 - 22
- 11% 23 - 25
- 13% 26 - 29
- 8% 30 - 35
- 4% 36 - 39
- 4% 40+

16. Gender:

- 13% Male
- 87% Female

17. Marital Status:

- 77% Single
- 21% Married/Have a partner
- 2% Divorced/Separated
- 0% Widowed

18a. **Including you**, how many adults live in your current household (i.e., while you are attending UWRF)?

	1	2	3+
Adults (18+ years old)	24%	37%	39%

18b. How many children live in your current household (i.e., while you are attending UWRF)?

	0	1	2	3+
Children (<18 years old)	77%	12%	6%	6%

19. What are your current living arrangements?

- 38% Residence Hall
- 32% Off campus rental apartment or rental home
- 15% Own home
- 11% Parent's home
- 4% *Other, See Appendix A*

20. Household income range:

- 33% Less than \$15,000
- 6% \$15,000 - 24,999
- 18% \$25,000 - 49,999
- 18% \$50,000 - 74,999
- 16% \$75,000 - 99,999
- 8% \$100,000 or more

21. What are your sources of funding for your university education? **Mark all that apply.**

- 66% Employment
- 34% Family Resources/Support
- 40% Grants
- 77% Loans
- 38% Scholarships
- 6% VA Educational Benefits (**Chapter 33**, Post 9/11 GI Bill)
- 4% VA Educational Benefits (**Chapter 35**, Survivors and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program)
- 8% **Wisconsin G.I. Bill** Tuition Remission Program
- 6% *Other, See Appendix A*

22. Are you aware there is an active Veterans' Club on campus?

- 32% Yes
- 68% No

23. Are you a member of the Veterans' Club on the UWRF campus?

- 25% Yes
- 75% No

24. As a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran, please rate the level of importance you place on the formation of an organization specifically addressing the needs of family members and dependents of service members and veterans on the UWRF campus?

Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Unsure
21%	43%	11%	25%

25. What is the **BEST** way to communicate with you? Select **MOST** preferred method only.

- 87% Emails
- 8% Veterans' Club Facebook page
- 2% Mailings
- 0% Twitter
- 0% Veterans' Services Office website
- 4% *Other, See Appendix A*

26. Did you complete last year's (2011) UWRF Veteran's Survey?

- 0% Yes
- 85% No
- 15% Unsure

27. Do you know where the Veterans' Services Office is located on the UWRF campus?

- 32% Yes
- 68% No

Appendix A – 2012 UWRF Family Member or Dependent of Veteran Survey Written Comments

1. Where do you go for information about services and education benefits to which you are entitled as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran? “Other” Responses (12 Responses)

- None (4x)
- I didn't know I was eligible for benefits as a family member.
- I didn't know there are services available.
- I didn't realize I was entitled to any education benefits.
- I don't know.
- I haven't looked.
- My CAA
- My father
- Nothing for spouses, Viking email

2. Are there other off-campus resources, support services, or organizations you or your family currently use, or have used, specifically due to your status as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran? (36 Responses)

- No (27x)
- Because of my age, (38), I have explored any services available to me. My father is a DAV but I am not a dependent so I assumed there were no longer benefits available to me.
- Family Services on his base. We have participated in yellow ribbon events, too.
- GI Bill
- IVAW (Iraq Vets Against the War) & Vets for Peace
- My CAA
- No support services, organizations, etc.
- Not that I know of.
- There are not any that I know for spouses. Didn't have a yellow ribbon event this deployment because it fell close to Christmas and New Year's. Deployed Jan 7th 2012.
- VA Hospital

4. Please provide recommendations of how the UWRF resources/services for which you rated poor or very poor in the previous question could improve. (10 Responses)

- During orientation for transfer students, there was supposed to be an academic advisor to help you choose your classes. My real advisor was not there and the person they gave us was not knowledgeable on the subject. Also when UWRF takes in transfer students, we CANNOT register until the very end. And most of the time the classes are filled up already. That does not help! Therefore we cannot get in the classes we need and may even be held back a semester or two.

- Help students better understand that they need to see their academic advisor before the next semester, clarify due dates for financial aid and other important things outside of just classwork. It is all so confusing.
- I wish that financial aid was more open about the financial aid opportunities. I think that they should post information about their deadlines.
- More explanation how financial aid is divided up and faster turn-around.
- More Resources/Opportunities for financial aid; More help achieving financial aid; gaining financial aid is difficult and complicated
- My problem is that I was given financial aid and then had it revoked because I was told I had passed a limit for federal loans. I would just like for financial aid to increase communication with loan providers so that this does not happen - it created a big problem for me.
- Never used it before.
- Students should have the option to switch academic advisors if theirs is not helpful, and this should be an easy process.
- They could help guide the Pre Majors better into picking a career path.
- Timing and the release of payment for my loans. I feel that the timing should be instantly issued the day after last day to drop a class, in the spring and summer. Financial Aid has the money in hand and has been holding since original issue. Also I took 3 classes instead of 4 so the payment was showing OK but was held up.

5. Has there been a member(s) of the UWRP campus community who has been particularly helpful to you as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran? If so, please provide their name and a brief description of their assistance. (30 Responses)

- No (25x)
- Ashley Olson, Dr. Ogden Rogers, Jennifer Gervais.
- Dr. Blodgett. If I had to miss a class period for an Army event he went out of his way to assist me. He also trains with us in the morning during PT.
- I have not directly dealt with anyone on campus specifically in regard to military status.
- I have only asked one question about Veteran services. He was very helpful but unfortunately I do not know his name!
- Michael Martin helped me with the transfer credits. Lynn Jermal gave me guidance and direction for my curriculum.

7. As a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran, please rate the level of importance you place on the following services as they apply to your particular situation. "Other" response (1 Response)

- I didn't know there were Veterans benefits.

8a. If yes, (to previous question asking if respondent is experiencing any difficulties that may cause them to stop attending UWRF) please describe the difficulties that may cause you to stop attending UWRF: (7 Responses)

- Classes are more difficult and lots of studying doesn't seem to help. Financial aid is no longer available, stress with work and school, and personal life.
- Financial. It's hard to find resources.
- I am a commuting student and they do not have enough parking that is close to campus for all of the students who commute. And the new plans for Cascade will mess up parking even more for those of us who commute. We need more places to park that do not cause us to walk for 15 minutes to get from our car to our classes.
- It's not really what I'm looking for in a campus. Everyone goes home on the weekends and it just isn't as involved.
- Lack of a special education minor. As a dependent of a military member my "home" is in North Carolina making the collaborative Early Childhood/Special Education program through Eau Claire nearly impossible.
- My Master's Program in Elementary Education makes it difficult to continue working while doing the academics portion due to the hours required for observation. It's not a military/veteran issue - it's just the nature of the program.
- Summer 2011 I joined the UWRF Cheer and Stunt. I am very familiar with stunting and tumbling however they were not. While executing a full down out of a stunt I hit my head on another girl and received a major concussion. I am still getting severe headaches, have less energy, and am often tired. I spent time doing physical and occupational therapy. If there was a trained coach I believe this would have never happened. In my opinion and those of my friends and family, they are NOT qualified to continue the practice of cheer and stunt. I am not the only person on the team who sustained injuries either, my teammate and close friend was also dropped out of a stunt; she did nothing wrong except trust the UWRF cheerleaders. She tore her ACL and received a lot of other injuries; the UWRF cheerleaders have cost us time, money, and lots of pain. If there was any reason why I would leave UWRF this would be it. Me and my friend both would like to take further action regarding this matter because we know there will be further injuries to girls who participate in this school activity. If you have any other further questions Please contact either myself or my roommate/teammate (my cell) 715/441-6846 or 651/247-2845.

10. Please identify areas where you could use or could have used additional assistance in making the transition to university life. "Other" responses (3 Responses)

- Career after graduation.
- My first year at UWRF, nobody told me about Knowles! I could have used the workout equipment there! Instead I paid for a gym membership. Wasted my time and money.
- Notification on paperwork ahead of time. I felt that River Falls didn't contact me in any way letting me know what paperwork is due and when.

11. What ONE THING could UWRF do to provide better service for you as a family member or dependent of a service member or veteran at UWRF? (41 Responses)

- None (5x)
- A diabetes support group.
- Accept Veteran forms from out of WI like MN, NE, and IA for students who are dependent on their family members who are, or were, service members.
- Advertise more for the types of services/benefits that are provided to us as family members of someone in the service.
- Better food.
- Better opportunities for financial aid.
- Communicate more about education benefits available.
- Educate more effectively on the benefits of being a dependent of a veteran. (Send mail, email etc.)
- Ensure that faculty are accommodating when it is necessary to miss a day of class for training.
- Give active duty military members and their dependents in-state tuition since they don't have a permanent home and are moved every 2-4 years.
- Have more options for me.
- Have more programs that inform others about the roles that they have and do play within helping our country.
- Helping me to understand exactly what benefits I am entitled to and how to go about getting them. I stopped by the booth during new student registration but it was such a crazy time that I didn't really understand everything I was told.
- I can't think of anything.
- I don't recall any outreach from the university related to being a spouse of a veteran, other than this survey. So if there are services available to spouses, outreach would be great. The correspondence would need to go directly to the spouse and not just the service member.
- I feel that since my two grandfathers and my father have served their country that I should get a reduced tuition or some type of break. Right now the children of wounded service members do.
- I would like to learn if there are any benefits of being a family member of a service member. I was never notified on anything and when I asked someone all they said was I needed to talk to my local VA and I have no idea about any of that, so just more information would be really nice.
- If they could explain better each branch of service and who qualifies as a veteran in UWRF.
- Let me know what services are actually available.
- Lowering tuition.
- Make clear benefits that dependents of veterans receive.
- Make it more known that these services are available.
- Make options more known.
- Maybe include the veterans to participate in community or campus events to show honor and appreciation because being the daughter of a veteran I have seen how hard it is to adjust back, so it would be nice to show more honor within the community.
- More information. I felt as if I was just placed in it, as I am a dependent/family member of a service member, but didn't really know what benefits I received from it. So better follow-up perhaps.

- More recognition.
- Presently I am a married graduate student, so I would not be eligible right now to benefit from my father's veteran status. However, as an undergraduate student, I was never informed of any benefits that I had for being the daughter of a veteran. I was a dependent of a veteran and never offered services.
- Provide a time line of when documents are to be filled out and turned in.
- Provide compensation for education even if the parent served in the military in a neighboring state.
- Provide marriage counseling for vets and spouses.
- Provide scholarships for veterans/dependents because financially veterans and their families have a lot of trouble in this economy, and in order to aim for a better life and a job, you need a good education.
- Put out posters making me aware of what I could do or where I could go to get more info.
- Reach out and say hi. I have attended and I am a non- traditional student. Also husband deployed. It would be nice to have someone to chat about issues like home, work, or life. I have no connection to anyone in particular. This can be alienating. Maybe have a group to attend with a purpose for meeting. Off or on campus. Wait, parking sucks. Off campus would be better!
- Send mail or email notifying when paperwork, such as financial aid or veteran's paperwork for the benefits, are due before they are due. I never knew when my benefit paperwork was due and exactly what needed to be filled out to receive the benefits until it was almost too late.
- Send out more information about summer term and J-term.
- Tell me what benefits I can receive by being a child of a veteran.
- Understanding of GI Bill benefits

13. My academic status is: "Other" responses (2 Responses)

- 3 classes
- Graduate student

19. What are your current living arrangements? "Other" responses (2 Responses)

- Fraternity house
- Living with a friend's grandparents.

21. What are your sources of funding for your university education? "Other" responses (3 Responses)

- Myself
- Unemployment
- Wisconsin Covenant

25. What is the best way to communicate with you? Select MOST preferred method only. "Other" responses (2 Responses)

- Phone
- Posters