**GIBCT Colmery Act Sec 116 Veteran Discussion Script**

*June 3, 2019*

**Welcome and Opening Remarks (5 minutes)**

*[When the participant is ready, the moderator will begin the session with the following introduction.]*

Thanks for joining us today! My name is [name], and I also have two colleagues on the line, Amy and Cindy. They are observing and taking notes. We work with a team at the VA that is enhancing the VA.gov website and we're interested in speaking with you today about a pilot program called VET TEC.

VET TEC is a tuition assistance program designed to help Veterans advance in IT careers by enrolling in high-tech training programs.

We’d like your thoughts on what aspects of the website work well and where we might make improvements to make things even easier for Veterans.

Before we start, I’d like to mention a few logistical details:

* We are interested in hearing your honest opinions. We are in no way testing your knowledge or ability. Our goal is to be sure that application meets Veterans’ needs. You are welcome to express any opinions you wish. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas and welcome your feedback.
* If for any reason you want to pause or stop the session at any time, just let me know. I'd be happy to do so.
* By testing the site thoroughly, we hope to ensure that it’s written in a thoughtful way and gives Veterans all of the information they need to make informed decisions.
* Do you have any questions so far?
* Lastly, we generally record sessions, in case we need to confirm that we have captured your opinions accurately.

Are you comfortable if I record the audio as we talk today?

Great! I'm going to turn on screen and audio recording now. Once it's on, I'll ask again, as we like to have your verbal consent

[The meeting host will begin audio and screen recording.]

Are you comfortable if we record the audio and screen movements today?

**Warm-up Questions (5 minutes)**

Before we look at the website, let’s start with a few warm-up questions.

1. What interest, if any, do you have in pursuing a career in the high-tech industry?

[He’s not involved in high tech]

1. If you were interested in attending a high-tech training program, how would you decide what course to attend?

For me, it would be word of mouth, find somebody that’s done it.

1. What factors would be most important to you when selecting a course?

A bunch of factors, I guess. Probably where it’s at. Maybe pay. Maybe standards. Stuff like that.

1. Have you used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before? If yes, what was your experience?

I’ve used the GI Bill when I first got out. I already knew where to go, so I just kind of went there and did that whole thing.

Okay, let's go ahead and walk through a few scenarios.

**Think Aloud**

While you are going through the site, we ask that you please think aloud and vocalize your thoughts and decisions. The more you say about what you are thinking and wondering, the more we’ll learn. We are interested in your first reaction to each page, as well as what you are thinking as you engage with each page. If you have questions about what information needs to go in a particular field, it’s likely that many other Veterans will too. Sharing your thoughts aloud may seem strange at first, but it helps us understand what you are thinking and give us valuable information.

**Review the VET TEC Overview Page (5 minutes)**

<https://vagov-content-pr-433.herokuapp.com/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/how-to-use-benefits/vettec-high-tech-program/>

To give you a little more background on the VET TEC program, we'd like to share an overview page with you. Feel free to take as much time as you like reading the page and let us know when you are ready to continue.

Do you have any questions about what you’ve read?

Nah, it looks good. It’s pretty simple stupid, and that’s what I look for.

**Prototype**

Let switch over to the Comparison Tool.

Just so you know, this is a prototype, rather than a real website. We create mock-ups like these and share them with Veterans in sessions like this to be sure we have everything right before we code the actual website. You'll notice that only certain links have been activated and you’ll not need to enter any data. When you click a field, text will appear automatically.

**Scenario #1 (10 minutes)**

Let’s assume you'd like to advance your IT career by taking advantage of the new VET TEC program. You are interested in finding a local training course to attend. Using the GI Bill Comparison Tool, how would you find a training course and determine how much housing allowance you’d receive while attending the course?

Please talk aloud and let us know what you are thinking.

[He didn’t seem to follow along with the scenario. Looked around at other options and thought the links on the right might have the answer.] I guess I’d hit search, yeah, and then it would come up.

[Theresa guided him to click VET TEC]. I did the voc rehab. I learned about voc rehab about a year after the GI Bill. I know the GI Bill, but I didn't know about anything else until a year later. [he searched schools]

So then I would do the Detroit school [he clicked it]. [On profile page] I was going through and reading the length of the programs. This is cool because it breaks down what’s given to you [calculator].

T: How would you decide between those two programs?

Me, personally, I would probably go for this one [in person] because it’s more money. Most people would go for that one because you can live off of that one.

I’m pretty sure most people would rather take home 2500 bucks than 800 bucks in their pocket.

T: impressions on tuition and fee who receives it?

I’m assuming that would be the school, correct? [He seemed a little bit confused about how the gray box calculated benefits]. [He didn’t understand how the total paid to you was being calculated (result of length x bah)].

*[After the participant has selected a program and shared thoughts aloud.]*

1. What are your first impressions of the process of searching for VET TEC providers and programs
2. What led you to select [Program Name] over the others?
3. What information on these pages is the most valuable to you?
4. What aspect of the page or the process might Veterans find confusing or unclear? Why?

**Scenario #2 (10 minutes)**

Let say you're interested in taking an online course to build your coding skills. Using the site, how would you find a couple of online courses?

Find online courses? You want me to do the whole thing again, as far as finding online courses?

That’s assuming it’s still VET TEC. I’m pretty sure most people won’t need 9/11 again. So is that ZIP code?

[He tried clicking Online only in the Search Results page]

Who needs 7,000 to go to school? So basically for 14 weeks, you’re going to give somebody 7 grand?

*[After participant finds at least two online programs.]*

If you were going to attend one, how would you decide between the two?

I guess you would just base it on, cos I guess here, it doesn’t really give you any information on the course as far as like, anything really.

It’s kind of like buying a car, almost. If I had to have this job, is the course I’m taking going to get me to that job I want or is it just a waste of time? It’s kind of like, ok, I don’t need to take that. Or yeah, I need to take that.

Most important? I would do something more within a 5 mile radius to get people to understand where it’s at. Maybe a city, state.

So you want to know what kind of suburb it is?

Right. If somebody lived 2 hours again as opposed to 10 minutes from the house.

Maybe a block explaining just a quick overview of what the course is supposed to be. Something really simple. I need that, I don’t need that.

I’m assuming if you click there, you would know more of the location and everything else. Other than that, it tells you right here you got two programs, length, what’s online what’s in person. Those numbers are ridiculous. I don’t know what people would use it.

How important would it go to that website [school site]? Very important if I wanted to know any information. For the most advanced type of people, they would get it right away.

This part is cool here. I would put this on the top more [SCOs] somewhere more obvious. If you spend 1 or 2 minutes on this page, you’ll find everything you’re looking for.

*[After the participant has explored the prototype and shared thoughts aloud.]*

**Potential Probing Questions**

**Profile Page**

1. As you think about the information you see and any additional information that might be helpful:
   * What factors are most important to you as you compare high-tech training providers and programs?
   * What factors would lead you to choose one training provider over another?
   * What factors would lead you to choose one course over another?
2. What thoughts or questions do you have about the list of programs and the information that is available?
3. What thoughts or questions do you have about the questions on the left side of the page?
4. What thoughts or questions do you have on the contents of the gray box on the right?
5. Why do you think the total amount paid to you varies from the monthly basic housing allowance rate?
6. What additional information about a program would help you make an informed decision?

**Results Page**

1. What are your thoughts on the contents of the cards?
2. Why do you imagine the tuition on each card is displayed as a range?
3. What thoughts or questions do you have about the questions on the left side of the page?
4. How did the information on this page contribute to your selection of a school?
5. How would you be interested in narrowing down the list of training providers?
6. In your mind, what is the difference between a school and a training provider?

**Landing Page**

1. What thoughts or questions do you have regarding the questions on this page? [Observe whether the user thinks to select 'VET TEC'.] [Observe to see if they notice that the search filter disappears when they select VET TEC]

**Scenario #3 (5 minutes)**

Let say you're interested in taking classes through Zoom Technologies. How would you learn about the courses they offer?

Would I type it in right here [search field]? That’s what I would do because it says enter school city or employer name. Assuming you knew what course or what thing you wanted to do, that’s what I would do.

Thinking I’d be able to do it through here, correct? [search field in Search Results; he eventually clicked on the school card].

There are no programs. You’d click here and go that route.

*[After the participant has explored the prototype and shared thoughts aloud.]*

**Follow up questions**

1. What thoughts or questions do you have about finding information on programs that are not listed in the comparison tool?

**Post-Task Interview (5 minutes)**

Now that you’ve had a chance to explore the site, I have a few final questions for you.

* What are your general impressions of finding information about VET TEC providers and programs in the GI Bill Comparison Tool?

For me, personally, I like information right there at the beginning so I don’t have to spend time scrolling and searching. I would just put a little bit more of the contact info, as far as this portion here. I would just have this at the top. I would put this right under there [put SCO under School Details at top]. Other than that, it’s like any other basic website.

* What additional enhancements or features would you recommend to improve the overall usefulness of this site?

What we do with veterans is simple stupid. Always go that route first. If you can eliminate more clicking and searching, that would be best. I know a lot of veterans, and we’re not all there, but we are. Everything else is exactly where it needs to be.

* How likely are you to use the GI Bill Comparison Tool in real life? It’s easy. It’s a lot easier than most other stuff trying to find stuff.
* Thinking about how you typically behave, would you be most likely to use the GIBCT on a desktop, tablet or phone? It would be easier on my phone because obviously we’re all attached to it, but using it on a laptop, it wasn’t difficult.
* Do you have any additional thoughts or comments you'd like to share?

No, like I said, it was pretty self-explanatory. It wasn’t too difficult. If you spend enough time on it, you answer your own questions.

**Thank-You and Closing**

*[The moderator concludes each session by thanking the participant for their time and for offering his/her opinions and suggestions.]*

Thank you very much for taking the time to give us your feedback today. We really appreciate your help!