**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?

None.

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

I would go online first and inquire about different courses and see what fit me better.

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

The biggest factor would be flexibility as far as time requirements because I work full time so it would have to work with my day job.

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

No.

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?

Ok, so where it talked about where I’m eligible for this program and it mentioned having at least one day of unexpired benefits, does it matter if you’ve divvied out the benefit percentage to different dependents?

It seems like a really good program.

**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.

[landing page] [she tried clicking on online only] [T pointed her to the dropdown] Ok, I would click on VET TEC.

[search results] Here is where I would pick what programs. This is also where it tells you the housing amount. Ooh, tuition is expensive. Ok, so you want me to click one of these? I would hope it would give me informatin about the program. [she clicked on skill distillery]. [she found the housing amount and tuition costs on the profile page]

Ok, so apart from the searching, it’s actually pretty easy. For the benefits, where is the $8,544 coming from? Ok, hold on. It’s a 16-week course, 4 months, so that’s where it comes from. The only thing that I would do is, because I asked that question, in the breakdown, the total paid to you, just reiterate that it’s a 16-week course, that that’s why you’re getting paid that amount.

*[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?

The most valuable to me is the timeframe and the housing allowance because, as a veteran, especially an in person one, if that person is working, I won’t be able to work to do this course. I know it’s 16 weeks, but how much time of day would it take? I would like to know how much time per day of class it is.

1. What aspect of the page or the process might Veterans find confusing or unclear? Why?

Where it says, “Learn more” is that relevant to the housing? [post 9/11 learn more]

**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?

Ok, so what I would do, I would click download data and it would have the information for all the schools, and I would compare that way. “About this tool” is that to compare the schools? Is that the only way you’d be able to compare or download data?

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

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

I would click “Get help choosing school”. It would be cool if there was, on the previous page [ search results ] if you could click the box, if you could check the box beside the school, and you could compare the schools, and it would show them up side by side. That would be really beneficial if you were able to click each one. I’m guessing that’s what the excel product does.

*[After the particpant 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?

There is no email address [for the school]. The phone number is great, but if no one answered, I could email them.

* + What factors would lead you to choose one training provider over another?
  + What factors would lead you to choose one course over another?

1. What thoughts or questions do you have about the list of programs and the information that is available?

I would want the programs to be hyperlinked. I would want them to take me to another screen that would tell me what “Technology professional 2” is about. There’s a big difference in tuition and timeframe, and the only major difference other than that is that it’s in person vs online.

T: how much would you want to know? I would want to know what is the major difference between the two. What is the major difference?

T: va would keep up to date? The va website wouldn’t necessarily have to keep it up to date. The main people that run the program should keep their information up to date, so that if you hyperlink the program, whoever is in charge of that would keep it up. That would be with any of them. If I click on these programs, it should take me to that website, like that program’s website... Why reinvent the wheel?

1. What thoughts or questions do you have about the questions on the left side of the page?
2. What thoughts or questions do you have on the contents of the gray box on the right?
3. Why do you think the total amount paid to you varies from the monthly basic housing allowance rate?
4. 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?

That one’s good because it gives you the main information, your tuition. The # of gi bill students, is that the amount of students that are enrolled at the moment? [how often is this actually updated?]

1. Why do you imagine the tuition on each card is displayed as a range?

It tells me that it’s based on what program you choose. I would think, because there’s a range, there’s multiple programs. Depending on which certification you choose, that would determine your housing amount.

1. What thoughts or questions do you have about the questions on the left side of the page?

These would be great if there were a lot of programs, but there are only 5. That works if there’s a major program that has all these options.

1. How did the information on this page contribute to your selection of a school?
2. How would you be interested in narrowing down the list of training providers?
3. In your mind, what is the difference between a school and a training provider?

The names don’t really tell me much on any of these. [confused about whether the cards name providers or programs]. The names don’t really tell me what the program is.

Zoom Technologies, is this brand new, I’m guessing, because there’s no tuition for school or students.

**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?

Right now, there is no program information.

T: thoughts on being linked to vet tec page? I don’t really like that. If there’s no program information yet, pretty much I’m looking on more information on that program and you took me back to the first screen.

T: where would you prefer to be taken? Nowhere. [she thought just saying that the programs are not available yet was enough instead of taking her to another page that wouldn’t have the program info anyways].

*[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?
* What additional enhancements or features would you recommend to improve the overall usefulness of this site?
* How likely are you to use the GI Bill Comparison Tool in real life?
* Thinking about how you typically behave, would you be most likely to use the GIBCT on a desktop, tablet or phone?
* Do you have any additional thoughts or comments you'd like to share?

**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!