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

*June 14, 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?
2. If you were interested in attending a high-tech training program, how would you decide what course to attend? I would probably use backwards claims. What’s my angle, what career do I want, and see if the requirements are already there.
3. What factors would be most important to you when selecting a course? How relevant is it. How easy is it for me to take it in person. Affordability, especially with Yellow Ribbon. […][1:18]
4. Have you used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before? If yes, what was your experience?

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?

I like this eligibility section right here. That way, you know what it is. Haivng this highlighted is a useful tool, especially if you’ve been staring at a screen. I know I’m looking at a screen inside of a screen, and I have pretty good eyesight, but some people might have a harder time with this smaller font. That’s good to know, that can make a big difference, your housing allowance, especially for a full-time student. I like this, having that, if you haven’t already applied, having that hyperlink right there. It avoids that hunting. I find tables very useful, so it’s clear what you’re getting back. It’s a clean website.

**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're moving to Detroit, Michigan and you'd like to advance your IT career by taking advantage of the VA's new high-tech program. Using the GI Bill Comparison Tool, how would you find a training course in Detroit and determine how much money you’d receive to help pay your rent while attending the course?

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

I’m just going through it line by line now. [he read akl the fields, tried clicking in person] I was just trying to select that. [he tried typing into the search field]. [eventually T guided him to select “Other program” option and he found vet tec]

[his impulse was to type in Detroit in SRP search field]

I want to know what this is, preferred provider.

T: how would you find out? I’d click that hyperlink. [he clicked Learn More for preferred providers] That’s helpful.

I really like this 3 GI Bill students. I’ve never seen that before, That would be useful, especially in getting their perspective on the program. We’re not always traditional students only. There’s a big difference in entering college when you’re in your 30s, mid-20s. School website, technology professional 2, price is right there. I like the length being right there, the format, the tuition. Those are all very important things as you’re trying to nake this decision. I know in the past finding information like that wasn’t always easy, especially the price. And estimate your benefits. I like the lengths too, tuition and fees. That’s helpful. This section right here, whre you can enter tuition and fees, I imagine that updates automatically when you select. I like having that here, too, as opposed to going to another website. You can click very quickly and go through this. I’m guessing the housing allowance is based on the zip code of the Detroit school or where you’re living. Then contact details. Who is the school certifying officials, who is that? Is it school officials, or that the va certifies them? That’s nice that you can apply right there, unless you’ve been approved. One thing I like that I didn’t see here is they let you know when you’re leaving, like a dot gov website. It’s usually an icon, and the little pop up box, just so you know you’re now leaving the va website. So I like that.

It’s just helpful, especially when you’re trying to make a decision, the author of the information. Am I reading va information?

[he understood exactly how benefits panel is calculated]

T: anything else that would be helpful? No, I don’t think so. It’s certainly a lot easier. I like that it’s clean and clear. Sometimes I can have too much information at once and you’re lost in the site. All those little hyperlinks you guys have [ learn more ] I find that interesting. There are a lot of places where I’d have a question and you have an answer right there [1:42].

You would get more in person. Ok, I see how it’s breaking it down [prorated online]

*[After the participant has selected one of the DSDT programs and shared thoughts aloud.]*

**Potential Probing Questions**

1. What amount would you expect to receive to help pay your rent as you take classes?
2. What are your thoughts on why the Monthly BAH rate is different from what you will actual receive while taking the course?
3. Would you expect to receive the same benefits for both programs?
4. How would you determine what amount of BAH you'd receive for the other course?
5. What aspect of the page or the process might other Veterans find confusing or unclear? Why?

**Scenario #2 (10 minutes)**

Let say you work full-time during the day and are interested in taking a web-based course in the evenings to build your technical skills. Using the site, how would you find a couple of web-based courses to compare?

[he clicked through and filtered for online in SRP] And we get two results. This makes a difference, seeing the preferred provider. This has more students, 2 programs, 2 programs, Tuition, 13k, housing is the same. Check out the details. So i…[1:45]

T: how would you learn more about the courses? [he tried clicking on the program external link]

T: how would you decide between the two online programs? I would definitely go through the courses, what courses are listed. [he was exploring DSDT website]

How I would do it is I’d go to each website and review the descriptions of each course.

T: asked him which SRP he preferred. I would prefer this [course first]. It puts more information right at you, instead of having to click through to code platoon. Especially if you don’t care what program it is. It’s got the information right up front. The length right here, that might be helpful.

T: how would you look up if ITT offered courses? Just search ITT tech. That would be my first move.

T: what if you wanted to study cybersecurity, what would you do? It’s a keyword so I’d type that in there. Or do ctrl+ F instead of having to browse.

T: how useful are the left filters? Keywords are important. I like this being a srot [learning format] Anything for sorting is useful. I like this [training providers] I hadn’t noticed this before. I like this preferred providers box, too, that’d be very helpful.

*[After participant finds at least two online programs (Code Platoon & DSDT]*

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

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

**Potential Probing Questions**

1. What led you to select [Program Name] over the others?
2. If both courses offered the same certification course in the same city, how would you determine which you'd prefer? (Would user select the preferred program?)
3. How would you learn more about the contents of the course?

**Alternative version of the Search Results Page**

[Return to the result page]

We’d also like your thoughts on a different version of the results page. The version you just looked at showed a list of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ . We have another version that displays a list of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ instead.  
We are interested in your thoughts on which you find most useful.

Would you rather see and be able to compare providers (like on this tab) or courses (like on this tab)?

**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!