**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? I do not.
2. If you were interested in attending a high-tech training program, how would you decide what course to attend? I would look at what my intented job was and then I would look for a program that was intended for what I wanted to do.
3. What factors would be most important to you when selecting a course? Location for I am, that it were close to me, and if it were online, that it’s flexible.
4. Have you used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before? If yes, what was your experience?
5. Used GI Bill benefits before? Yes, I have.

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.

When I look at this, I almost wonder if what type of training vet tec covers should come before am I eligible? If I don’t know what it is, I might not scroll down. So it covers tuition, and the money for housing, so it’s really similar to the stipend that you get in your gi bill benefit. Is this an exclusive list right now or is there more that they need to add? I would almost say that, say that if they’re not on this list, they’re not covered by vet tec, and then say that more programs are being added all the time and this is the most up to date. Then you get your certification, and then ore information. And then all of those links work to the various schools.

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

**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.

[SRP] If I clicked on city and school, I would type in Detroit there and eliminate all the other options. I think I missed. Does this person want to go in person or online? Obviously it’s 5 schools, so I would look at all the schools.

T: what do the ranges mean? I think it’s the location of the school. If I were the person wanting to do it, I would probably want to go to the school having the most money.

I look at it saying 2 programs, and I would assume there’s a range because of those two programs.

[School profile] I wonder what the difference is between tech pro 2 and 6 because that is not very descriptive. This is nice that it has the housing allowance. Are those programs pretty selective? I would want to know how accepting they are before I applied to my gi bill benefit.

I’m curious, do you get a job with technology professional 2? 2 weeks is so short. If you can get an entry level job with 2 weeks, that’s great.

I lik that it has that total paid to you so you know what you’re getting with the housing.

*[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?

I think, first of all, the look of it is very clean. I like that it’s not very word-heavy. I like that. [she likes the additional resources link for learning about vet tec].

I would say if you had questions about vet tec, then maybe you’d want to have that [in the profile page]. Otherwise, this is really clear about the school and what the benefits are.

**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?

[she navigated to landing page, then searched vet tec providers]

*[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?

I would look at the two different schools. [the length is important for her] Going to the school and comparing programs.

T: anything else to compare? For me, I like that there are 7 students in one and 3 in the other. To be honest, if the benefits are being covered, I don’t really care what the tuition is.

T: thoughts on yellow star? I saw that on the first webpage we were talking about in the beginning. The preferred providers are the ones that help you find a job afterwards. It would depend on my situation. If you were educated on how these high tech jobs are desirable fields. I know that coding is really big, and if you have the coding background that jobs are right there. If I were coming out of active duty, that would probably be important to me…[11:22] There are so many different variable with that, but it would be challenging for me to say whether that’s important or not important. If I were getting a degree in English, I would be like, heck yeah.

*[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)?

For me, I don’t know what Technology professional 2 vs 6 is. It’s taking me a lot of extra clicks. If you knew what tech pro 2 is, if there was a description. Even web developer, we all use the internet, but what does that really entail? What the heck is a web developer? It’s just the silliest title, technology professional…There would just need to be a description. I guess if there was a toggle. I want to look at the job I want, and I want to find the best program for the job I want. I just don’t know what these things are. I think both options are good, but you need a little more information to be able to use this format [course-centered. There could be a brief sentence in there to describe it. If you clicked web developer, a pop up could come up. Clicking a link like that isn’t always intuitive. What happens if I click that? Oh, it goes to the school. Even the eye circle, there could be a pop up with the description or even possible places you would get job. Like a school it dept.

[she would want to be able to compare courses/schools using a box of some sort]

**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!