

Streamlining Your Veterans Certification Process

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Michigan State University

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Michigan State University

MSU Campus

- 5,200 acres with 2,100 in existing or planned development
- 17,500 acres throughout Michigan used for agricultural, animal, and forestry research

Academics

- 200 program of undergraduate, graduate, and professional study
- 17 degree granting colleges (includes College of Law affiliation)

Global

- More than 275 study abroad programs on all continents in more than 60 countries

Michigan State University

Student Enrollment – Fall 2013

- 49,343 students enrolled: from all 83 counties in Michigan, all 50 states and more than 130 countries
- 37,278 undergraduate, 10,310 graduate & professional, and 1,755 non-degree
- 52% women, 48% men
- 16.1% students of color, 13.5% international
- Approximately 529,000 living alumni worldwide

Veteran Statistics

Fall 2013 Certifications = 439 Students

- Chapter 33 = 295
 - Dependents = 127
 - Service Members = 168
 - Guest = 5
- Chapter 31 = 11
- MSU DVAP = 5
- Chapter 30 = 7
- Chapter 1606/1607 = 49
- Chapter 35 = 72

What is Process Mapping?

Process mapping is a technique for documenting activities in a detailed, compact, and graphic form to help managers understand processes and highlight areas for potential improvement. (Hartley, Melnyk, Swink, & Cooper, 2010)

Process Mapping

Goal – Assist Michigan State University in becoming more efficient with the certification process

Process Mapping by the Orion Development Group

- Selected team members
- Overviewed process
- Looked at current process (work flow)
- Identified gaps
- Started mapping the process

Process Mapping

- System Map
- Top down flow chart
- Block Diagram
- Activity Chart
- Workflow diagram
- Cross functional flow chart

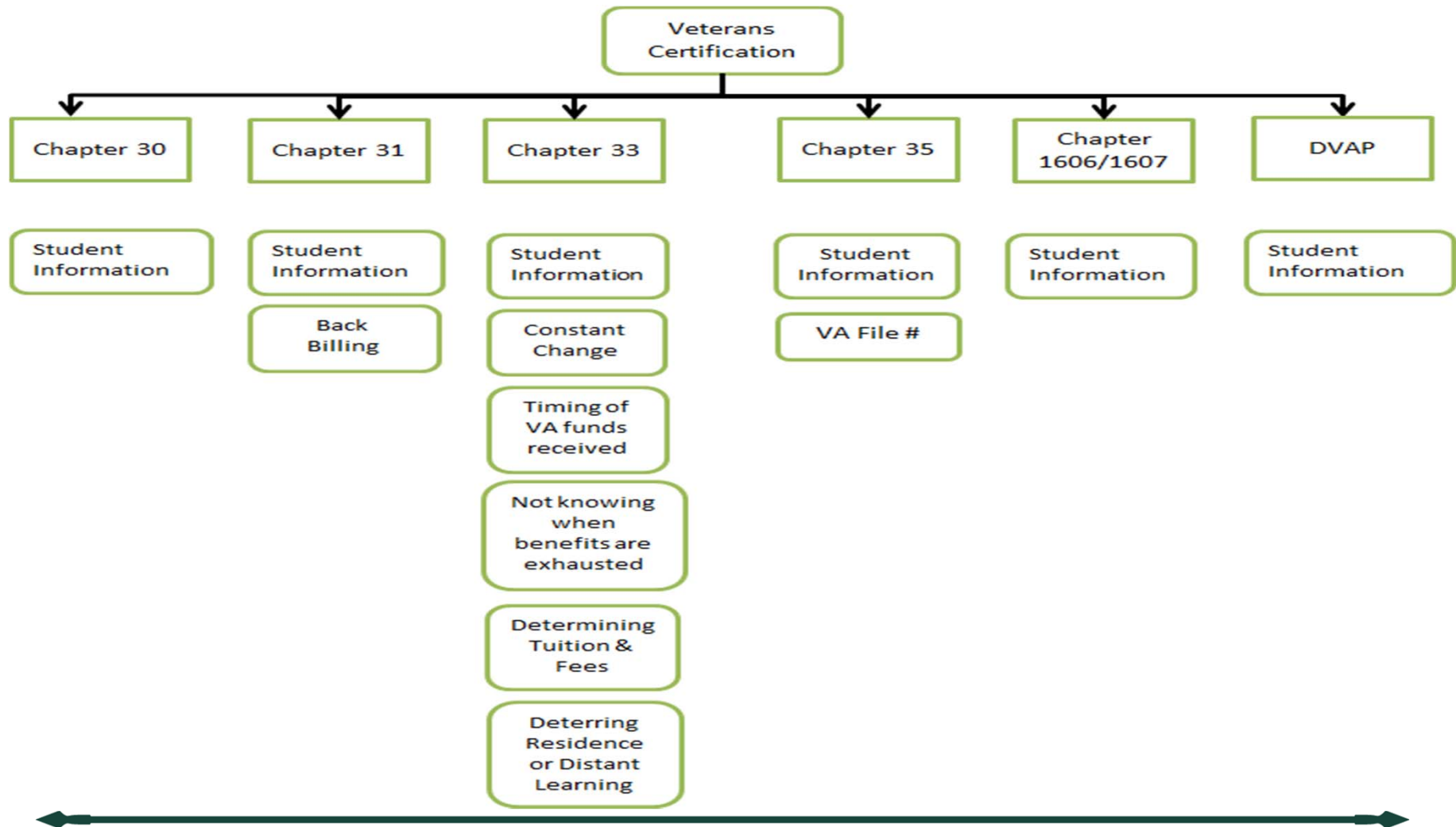
Why Process Mapping?

- MSU processing has not been reviewed from start to finish in many years
- As new chapters, processes, and reporting needs have changed, we have modified our process, but have been unable to review the process as a whole
- Look at staffing needs and realistic expectations for staff
- Assure partnerships with other MSU departments
- Provide excellent Customer Service to our Veterans

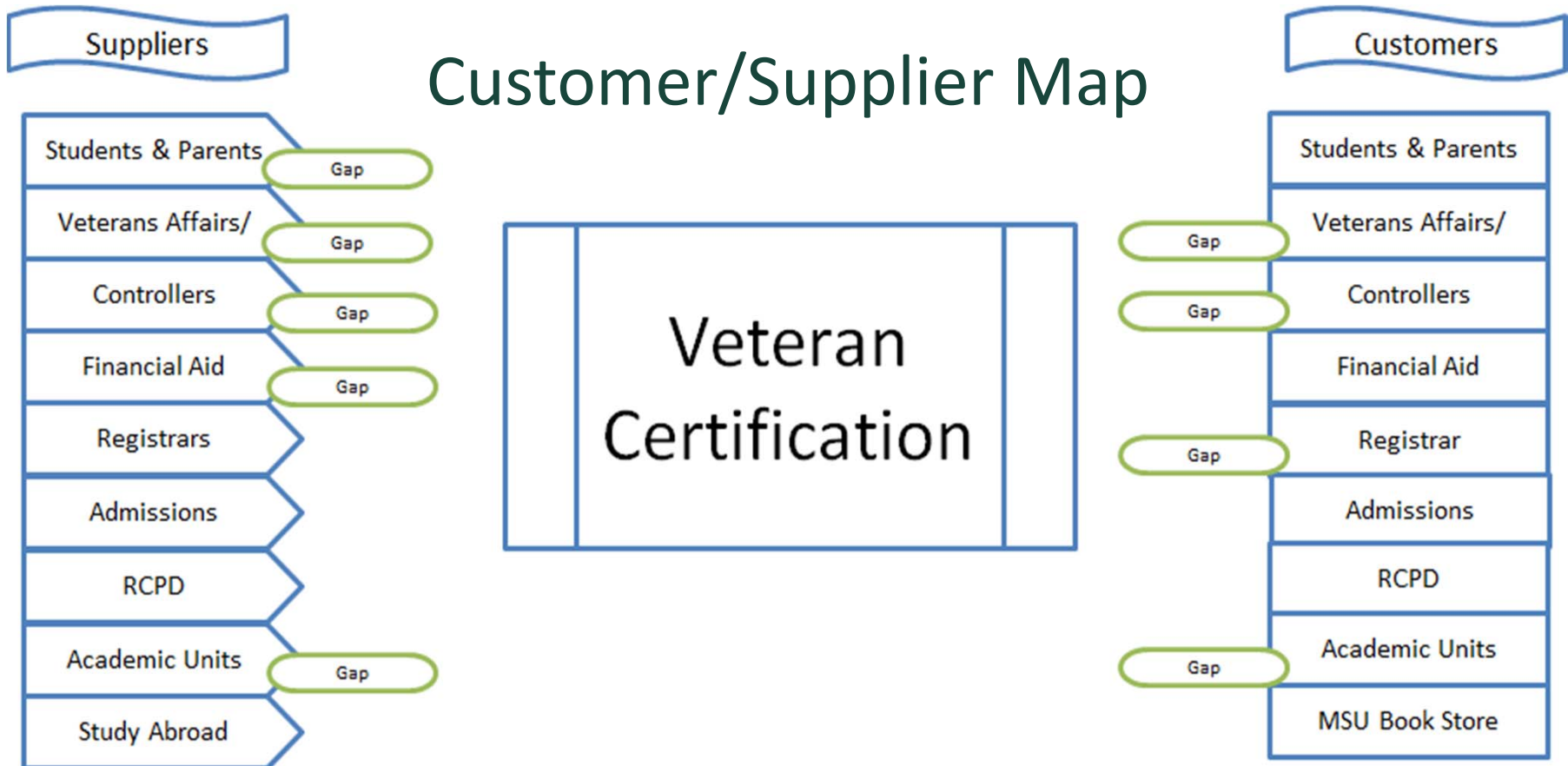
Process Mapped

- Enrollment Certification and student tuition payments for students utilizing Department of Veterans Affairs Educational Benefits.
- Of the over 400 students each semester using VA Educational Benefits. MSU receives tuition payments directly from the Department of Veterans Affairs for 75% of students certified.
- With changing legislature pertaining to VA Educational Benefits, it was important for MSU to exam our certification process to the Department of Veterans Affairs as well our internal units contributing to certification. The Office of the Registrar and Controllers Office work collaboratively reporting tuition to VA, processing payments to student accounts, reviewing for overpayments, and processing debt.

Map of the Process - Overview



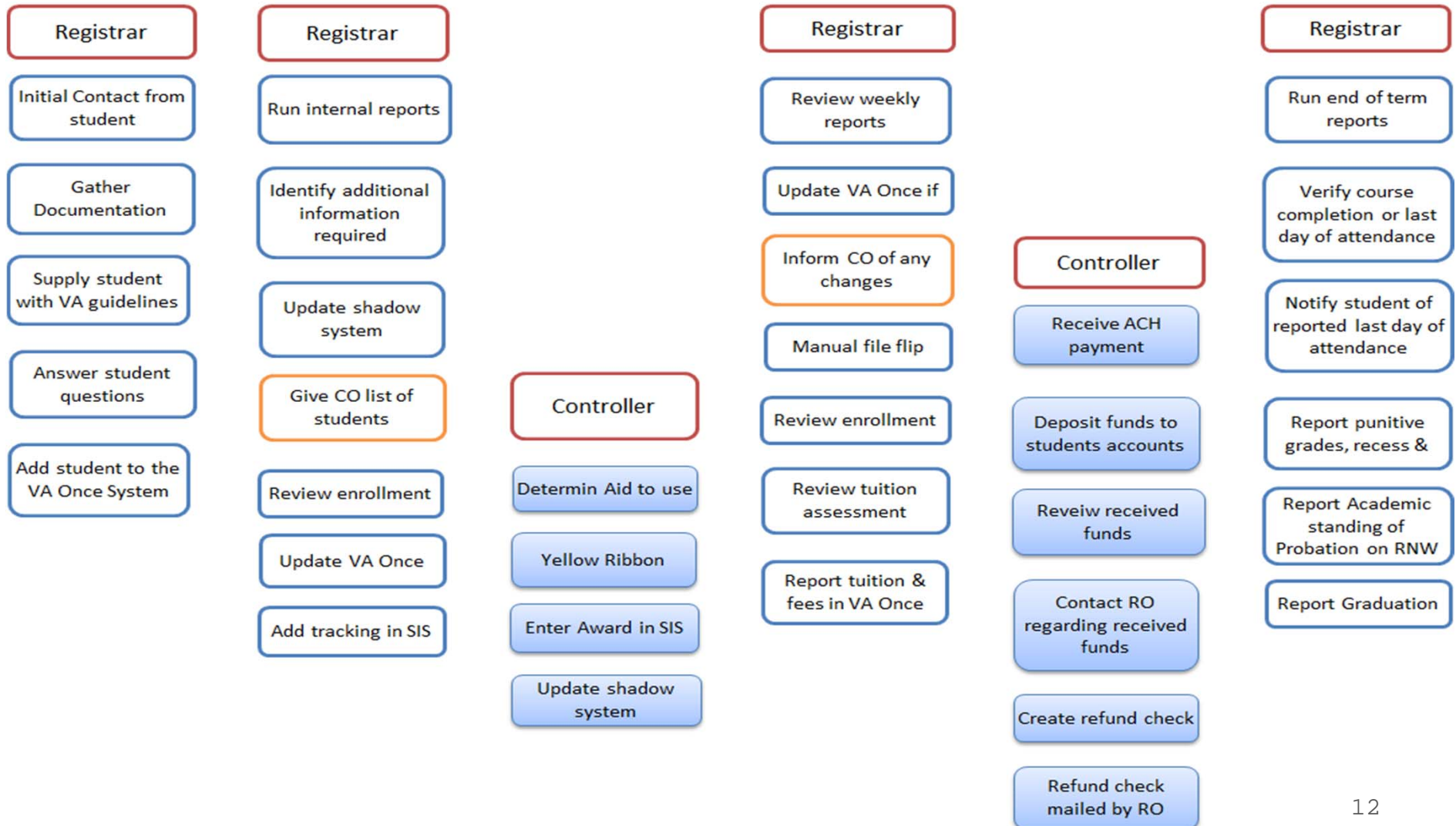
Customer/Supplier Map



Gaps:
 Student & Parents - lack of required doc.
 VA - guidelines, training, bills, tuition & fees
 Controller - payment discrepancies, refund checks, data reports, tuition & fees
 Financial Aid - tuition & fees specific awards, data reports
 Academic Units - program information

Gaps:
 VA - understanding changing regulations, bill backs
 Controller - accurate information, updates, bill backs, training
 Registrar - Provide training, disseminating information
 Academic Units - training

Top-Down Flow Chart



Michigan State University
Office of the Registrar
Veteran Enrollment Certification Request

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____
Social Security Number: _____ MSU PID: _____
Address: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____
Local Telephone Number: _____ MSU Email: _____@msu.edu
Degree Program: _____ Currently Active Duty Military? Yes No

Please check GI Bill benefit:

_____ Chapter 1606 Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserves
_____ Chapter 1607 Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP)
_____ Chapter 30 Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty
_____ Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation Name of VA Counselor _____
_____ Chapter 33 Post-9/11 GI Bill _____ Service Member _____ Dependent _____ % of Benefit
_____ Chapter 35 Survivors' & Dependents' Assistance – Service Member Name _____
VA File Number _____ Service Member SSN: _____

If receiving other aid specifically for paying tuition (examples – Federal Tuition Assistance, Graduate Assistantship, Fellowship, MSU Faculty/Staff course fee courtesy), please indicate below.

- It is my responsibility to ensure that I have enrolled in the proper courses in accordance with my degree program.
- Enrollment in an unauthorized repeat course(s) **will not be certified with the VA.**
- It is my responsibility to promptly notify the Veteran Certification Office of any registration changes. Any reduction or termination of my enrollment **may create a debt with the VA.**
- I understand that MSU certifies enrollment based on dates of the course and attendance. Any unofficial withdrawal prior to the end of the term resulting in a failing grade of 0.0 will be report to the VA with the last date of attendance indicated by the Instructor of the course.
- I understand that **I must report the receipt of federal tuition assistance to the Veteran Certification Office.**

My signature below confirms that I understand and agree to abide by the guidelines printed above as have been provided with MSU's VA Enrollment Guidelines.

Signature

Date

Submit completed form to the Veteran Certification Office, Hannah Administration Building, 426 Auditorium Road, Room 150, East Lansing MI 48824, fax (517) 432-3347, telephone (517) 355-5032



Certifying Official Timeline

- Changes after our compliance visit

Debt Repayment Process

- Review VA file
- Contact VA for additional information
- Contact Controller's office for funds received
- Determine if the debt is a true debt
 - If not, write a letter to the VA
- Request check from Controllers Office
- Mail check to VA

Recommendations

Recommendation	#1 Veteran Data	#2 Chapter 33	#3 VA Debt
Policy/Practice	Updated application	Controller's office has VA Once access	Registrar's & Controller's office working together
Other Actions to Improve the Process	Added student email in VA Once	Controller's office views enrollment data in VA Once	Registrar's office provides details of any changes
Constraints to Remove that Require Help		Creating a common system for Registrar & Controller's offices	Timing of information from the VA
Required Stakeholders		Registrar, Controller, and Tech Support	Registrar and Controller
Office to Lead this Process	Registrar	Registrar & Controller	Registrar

Lessons Learned

- The MSU external customers are well served.
- Look carefully when formulating the work group to assure that key individuals who can make decisions/changes are around the table
- Increased positive communication and collaboration between the Office of the Registrar and the Controller's Office
 - Initial change not necessarily the best
 - Continuing to review for best utilization of staff time

References

Boehringer, R.D., Dietz, A., King, P., & Smith R., (2008). The Process Management Memory Jogger. Salem, NH: GOAL/QPC.

Hartley J.L., Melnyk S., Swink M., & Cooper M.B., (2010). Managing Operations Across the Supply Chain. Columbus, OH: McGraw-Hill.

Questions ?

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