This brochure was produced with the support from the Office of Naval Research grant #N00014-17-S-F002 (Engaging Military Veterans to Increase Engineering Enrollment and B/S, M/S, and PhD Degrees Awarded) and #N00014-18-S-F003 (Retooling Veterans with Service- and Combat-Connected Disabilities in Advanced Virtual Engineering).

**Veterans in Engineering Programs**

They are trained. Now it’s time for an engineering education for an advanced position in today’s world.

**Charlotte, NC is a veterans hub**

UNC Charlotte is located in a state and county with a large population of veterans, including a high number of retirees and college-ready candidates.

The William States Lee College of Engineering currently has 160+ engineering students who are veterans, but this is a small number considering that, in 2010, there were 100,000 veterans living in North Carolina, with approximately 54,300 veterans residing in Mecklenburg County (where UNC Charlotte is located) and an estimated 14,000 veterans are out-processed in the region annually. Veterans represent approximately 8% of the county’s adult population. This program addresses the need for broadening participation by this population in undergraduate STEM education by creating educational components that use their interests and previous training to increase the number of veteran engineering students and graduates.

**UNC Charlotte was formed for veterans**

After World War II, the University of North Carolina, at the request of the North Carolina College Conference, opened a center in Charlotte to provide higher-education classes for returning veterans. UNC Charlotte (formerly Charlotte College) began to meet an acute need presented by returning veterans in 1946.

**RESOURCES**

- **CAMPUS**
  - Veteran Service Office
  - Veteran Center and Lounge
  - Veteran Park
  - Academy for Veteran and Military Health
  - Military Affairs Committee
  - 2-3 Graduate Fellowships
  - Veteran faculty in most departments

- **COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING**
  - Veteran Advocate/Coordinator
  - Peer-to-Peer tutoring
  - Limited number of partial tuition assistance
Veterans need this program and we need them!

A veteran cohort tends to excel at UNC Charlotte due to the statistically higher age and life-experience most veterans possess. They make outstanding peers for the balance of the student population with is important to the University’s diversity. Additionally, the need for a college degree tends to be higher for veterans due to two factors: 1) the propensity for veterans to have physical disabilities due to service or combat related activities, which increase the need for a career with lower physical impact; and 2) the higher unemployment rate of this cohort.

LARGE NUMBER OF VETERANS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PROGRAM

Sixty-one percent of the veteran population (age 25+) is college eligible whereas only 49% of the general population is eligible.

A VETERAN’S STRENGTH IS IN THEIR PERSISTENCE AND GOAL ORIENTATION

“I came back to school with a better outlook on what I could and couldn’t do. I had more confidence in my ability to learn and to do whatever I needed to do to get it done. I’ve come to realize that engineering isn’t about how intelligent you are. It’s about 30 percent intelligence and 70 percent diligence.”

Caleb, veteran student

Veteran students also find a natural connection between their military experience and engineering, as well as a sense of community inside the veteran population in the College of Engineering.

MILITARY TECHNOLOGY AND EARLY ENTRY GRADUATE SCHOOL

Military veterans in the College of Engineering are currently offered partial tuition assistance on top of their existing benefits to enter graduate school early. This funded program is aimed to fill the pipeline of Naval and defense STEM researchers.

The UNC Charlotte Graduate School also conducts targeted recruiting and supports 3 veteran graduate fellowships per year. graduateschool.uncc.edu/CDReynolds

INTERNSHIPS

UNC Charlotte offers robust career development programs including professional development and internship searches. The College of Engineering, in particular, has had success placing its students in internships in a variety of industries such as the Department of Defense.

VIRTUAL ENGINEERING

With fast-paced developments in computer horse-power and analytical tools, engineering design decision-making processes are moving from outcomes based off pure physical testing towards more and more computer simulations or virtual laboratory analyses. This makes the existing situation of nation-wide acute shortages of well-equipped engineers to meet the ever-expanding demand of Computer-Aided Engineering (CAE) simulation engineers even more severe. The Mechanical Engineering Department has developed a program to train students on “Virtual” engineering and prepare them for a career in defense and Naval STEM related areas.

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

The program invites defense industry employers to be guest lectures in selected classes and participate in graduate mentorship. This allows for one-on-one interaction between veteran students and employers during undergraduate and graduate studies which could lead to internships or post graduation employment.

PROGRAMS

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ALERT: UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE 7203 Spain Road | Charlotte, NC 28223

Take a Tour

View an online tour of the College of Engineering https://engr.uncc.edu/about-us/virtual-tour

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