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### G.I. Bill recipients at UM are 11.3% of gross enrollment

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G.I. BILL RECIPIENTS AT UM  
ARE 11.3% OF GROSS ENROLLMENT

by Gregory S. Lenihan  
UM Information Services

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a series of articles dealing with armed forces veterans at the University of Montana.)

MISSOULA--

Of the 1974 fall quarter gross enrollment of 8,626 at the University of Montana in Missoula, 11.3 percent of the student body is composed of persons supported by the G.I. bill. According to Helen Kidder, UM veterans' coordinator, there are approximately 975 persons receiving G.I. bill benefits at UM, a figure which includes widows and wives and children of disabled veterans.

A statistical look at the student veteran in general, in contrast to his nonveteran peers points out some important differences. A survey published by the American Council on Education entitled "The Vietnam-Era Veteran Enters College" includes these findings:

Veterans come from more disadvantaged backgrounds; veterans are older--the modal age of entering student veterans is 22-25, while the modal age of nonveterans is 18; 38 percent of veterans in college are married, compared with 1.2 percent of nonveterans; veterans generally have poorer academic records in high school than nonveterans; and veterans are more likely to be majoring in business or in technical fields than pursuing a professional degree.

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New to the UM staff this year is veterans' adviser Larry Paige, who is headquartered in the Financial Aids Office, room 101 of the UM Lodge. Paige was hired by the Veterans Administration to provide local and immediate grass roots assistance to veterans interested in obtaining VA benefits. Paige said he considers his secondary function to be the referral of UM veterans with special problems to a proper counseling resource.

Commenting on the limited number of military veterans involved in the campus veterans' group, Paige said:

"Of the 975 persons on the G.I. bill at UM, only 10 have become active members of the University Veterans' Club. There are a number of possible reasons for this lack of interest--the majority of veterans at UM are married and live off-campus; many are hesitant to associate themselves with anything resembling a military organization; and others are cynical about any activity whatsoever."

Paige, who has a master's degree in counseling from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, said that UM veterans interested in talking about problems or needs they have should feel free to contact him.

"Another person to see is Dr. John E. Stenger, counseling psychologist at the UM Center for Student Development," Paige said. "Stenger is involved in discovering the concerns of off-campus UM students and what programs need to be developed for them. Since most veterans at UM live off-campus, Stenger would be a good person to contact."

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