

OUT OF COMBAT AND INTO THE CLASSROOM: HOW COMBAT EXPERIENCES
AFFECT COMBAT VETERAN STUDENTS IN ADULT LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

by

MARIA L. CLARK

B.S., University of Southern Mississippi, 1996
M.A., Liberty University, 2002

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Educational Leadership
College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

2014

Abstract

A new group of learners is emerging in the adult learning environment as a result of the United States being at war for more than 10 years. More than two million warriors served in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Educational institutions across the United States are experiencing growing numbers of students who are military combat veterans of the GWOT. These numbers will continue to grow as more of them transition back into life after combat. These students are arriving in class with varying levels of combat trauma experience and possibly Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), major depression, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or a combination of these and other difficulties.

The purpose of this research was to learn from military veteran students how their combat experience affects them in the classroom. Specifically it looked at the types of combat experiences they have and the types of physical and mental effects they report experiencing while attending and participating in educational learning activities. This research sought to gain insight into how combat experience influences the learning experience for GWOT military combat veterans who participate in an educational learning environment. It explored the types of experiences these students bring into that learning environment and how their participation in learning activities is affected.

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Approved by:

Major Professor
Dr. Sarah Jane Fishback

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my uncle Glenn E. Oehms for his service in the Vietnam War and to all the faces a soldier never forgets.

A Man Changes

A man changes a bit

When he runs on the face of the dead

On a steamy Viet Nam trail

While bullets fill the air.

In the fiery heat of battle

There was yet a moment's pause

For my soul to feel the sorrow

Of the man whose face I trod.

G. Oehms, A memory of 1969, © 1972

© 1998, A Pocketful of Poesies

I love you, Uncle Glen!

Chapter 1 - A New Group of Learners

“I died in Iraq. The old me left for Iraq and never came home. The man my wife married never came home. The father of my oldest three children never came home. If I didn’t die, I don’t know what else to call it.” (Castner, 2012, p. 157)

Introduction

A new group of learners is emerging in the adult learning environment as a result of the United States being at war for more than 10 years. Educational institutions across the United States are experiencing growing numbers of students who are military combat veterans of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). These students are arriving in class with varying levels of combat trauma experience and possibly Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), major depression, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or a combination of these and other difficulties. The Pew Research Center developed a team to conduct research with Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Veterans in 2011 and found that “although the vast majority of OEF and OIF veterans believe that their military service was rewarding and had favorable outcomes (such as learning how to work with others and building self-confidence), 44% report readjustment difficulties, 48% strains on family life, 47% outbursts of anger, 49% posttraumatic stress, and 32% an occasional loss of interest in daily Activities” (Taylor et al., 2011, p. 1).

This research sought to determine how combat experience affects GWOT Combat Veterans while participating in adult education. By exploring the lingering effects of the combat experiences these veteran students have had and the challenges they face while attending adult education, this research examined the difficulties they may be experiencing while participating in the adult learning environment.

Background

For many young people, joining the military means being away from home for the very first time. For others, adjusting to the “military way of life” is a complete 180-degree turn from the life they are currently accustomed (TodaysMilitary.com, 2013). The U.S. Military consists of five active-duty Services and their respective Guard and Reserve units. All branches are equal

parts of the United States Uniformed Services, headed by the president as commander in chief (TodaysMilitary.com, 2013). Every day, many thousands of service members devote themselves to protecting freedoms, maintaining peace, providing relief and supporting policy around the globe. The environments can be dangerous. The conditions can be challenging. The stakes are always high (TodaysMilitary.com, 2013).

Dr. Jonathan Shay (2003), author of *Achilles in Vietnam*, describes an Army as “a moral construction.” He writes, “Any Army, ancient or modern, is a social construction defined by shared expectations and values” (p. 6). Along with war fighting skills, these values are taught throughout their military careers. Expectations are articulated through regulations, orders, and standard operation procedures covering nearly every activity in which the military might partake. Many men and women have committed their lives to this profession. Some come from a lineage spanning generations of forefathers while others are the first in their family to serve in the military. “Ask veterans of any era why they joined, and the answer is usually the same: to serve their country” (Taylor et al., 2011, p. 33).

Prior to the events of 9/11 in 2001 more than 20 years passed during which most men and women in the military saw minimal violent conflict in which they actually fought and defended their country through combat. Aside from older Vietnam or Cold War veterans, students in the learning environment were not likely to have experienced military combat. Following the events of 9/11, more than 2.2 million men and women deployed into combat (DMDC, 2013). Most were active duty military members who served the military as their primary career and returned from combat to normal duty assignments within the military. They continued to be surrounded by fellow comrades. However, nearly half of the men and women who return from combat were Reserve and National Guard members. Though some of them returned to active duty military positions, the majority were released from active duty and transitioned back to civilian careers where few or no military members were available for them to find comradeship. This transition, after experiencing combat, is challenging but even more so for those who suffered trauma or injuries and lasting disabilities.

According to the *U.S. Military Casualties - GWOT Casualty Summary by Casualty Type* (DMDC, 2014), 58, 688 casualties have been reported (see table 1-1). The DoD Joint Publication 4-02 (2012) defines a casualty as “Any person who is lost to the organization by reasons of having been declared dead, duty status – whereabouts unknown, missing, ill, or injured.” The

majority of reported casualties shown in table 1-1 are considered hostile casualties. The DoD Joint Publication 4-02 (2012) defines a hostile casualty as “A person who is the victim of a terrorist activity or who becomes a casualty in action...” Though the majority of the casualties were wounded, nearly seven thousand are dead. These casualty numbers do not, however, represent the unseen injuries resulting from combat. Table 1-1 shows the various casualty types experienced in the GWOT as of February 2014.

Table 1-1 U.S. Military Casualties; GWOT Casualty Summary by Casualty Type (As of February 27, 2014)

Operation/Casualty Type	Weaponry	Other	Transportation	Pending	Unknown	Medical	Total
OEF Hostile Death	507	1,073	28	20	176	2	1,806
OEF Non-Hostile Death	132	175	89	16	27	55	494
OEF Pending Non-Hostile Death	0	7	0	0	0	0	7
OEF Wounded in Action	3,656	10,461	16	21	5,473	39	19,666
OIF Hostile Death	2,079	1,062	92	64	170	14	3,481
OIF Non-Hostile Death	273	256	255	24	27	94	929
OIF Wounded in Action	19,324	8,950	131	25	3,495	17	31,942
OND Hostile Death	12	26	0	0	0	0	38
OND Non-Hostile Death	16	4	0	0	2	6	28
OND Wounded in Action	77	207	0	0	13	0	297
Total	26,076	22,221	611	170	9,383	227	58,688

(DMDC, 2014) https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/report_sum_reason.xhtml Public Domain

A RAND study titled *Invisible Wounds of War* (2008) showed approximately 300,000 veterans suffer symptoms of PTSD, major depression, or TBI. Dr. Charles W. Hoge (2010), author of *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior: Navigating the Transition from Combat to Home Including Combat Stress PTSD, and mTBI*, points out that “Most warriors, even after going through extreme stress and trauma, do not develop PTSD. But they are also not the same person after deployment as they were before, and this is part of what it means to be a warrior” (p. xiii).

Researchers have sought to aid military combat veterans as they transition home and have published their findings in recent years to increase the knowledge of military culture and the impact of their combat experiences. Books such as *Moving a Nation to Care: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and America’s Returning Troops* by Meagher (2007) have been published to share combat experiences and discuss a variety of topics such as Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), killing, resilience, and the treatment of unseen injuries. *An Operators Manual for Combat PTSD* is provided by Dr. Ashley R. Hart II (2000). *After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families* is provided by Slone and Friedman (2008) and Whealin,

DeCarvalho, and Vega (2008) published the *Clinician's Guide to Treating Stress After War: Education and Coping Interventions for Veterans*. Researchers in various professions have published multiple books, reports, and journal articles on this important topic.

Veterans like Lt. Col Grossman (2009), author of *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* and co-author of *On Combat: The Psychology of Deadly Conflict in War and in Peace* (Grossman & Christensen, 2008), have written to explain these battlefield concepts while doctors Bret A. Moore (a former Army psychologist) and Carrie H. Kennedy (2011) (a Navy lieutenant commander and aerospace experimental psychologist) provide tips for post-deployment in *Wheels Down, Adjusting to Life After Deployment*. There are multitudes of articles and books such as *Gray Land; Soldiers in War* by Barry Goldstein (2009) that allow men and women to share their war stories. Brian Castner (2012) wrote a compelling book, *The Long Walk; A Story of War and the Life That Follows*, in which he provides insight into the mind and body after war and trauma.

Brian Castner is a prior Air Force officer who served three tours in the Middle East (two leading an explosive ordinance disposal (EOD) mobile unit in Iraq). He speaks with openness as he describes “the crazy” (Castner, 2012, p. 1) to help us understand how stepping off a curb or standing in an airport can send him swirling into a barrage of thoughts, feelings, physical reactions, and overwhelming vigilance forcing him to see threats and enemies where there are none. Castner’s (2012) story shows us that not only have military combat veterans experienced atrocities in war but they may also be feeling a deeper suffering at home. He describes the day his “crazy” began while walking with his aunt in Portland, Oregon, “I stepped off the curb normal. When my right foot hit the pavement I was crazy” (p. 123). According to Castner, “Everyone has a day.” Castner explains how he uses logic to cope; however, he is haunted by memories and unexplained feelings that hijack him without notice and can persist for days. He explains how it haunts him in the following passage:

The Crazy feeling distracts from every action, poisons every moment of the day. It demands full attention. It bubbles, and boils, and rattles, and fills my chest with an overwhelming unknown swelling. My misery compounds.

I wake every morning hoping not to be Crazy. Every morning I am. I grind through. Month follows month.

This is my new life. And it's intolerable.

I can't do this. (Castner, 2012, p. 65)

Brian Castner received a Bronze Star, a distinguished Federal medal for heroic or meritorious achievement, for his combat service. He now serves as an independent civilian consulting contractor training military EOD units in tactical bomb-disposal procedures. Castner's lingering combat experiences that invade his civilian life may be representative of many men and women returning from war. Though there is research using instruments designed to measure combat experience, depression, PTSD, and resilience, none could be found that directly asked combat veterans how their combat experience affects them every day, particularly in the adult learning environment.

Early in the GWOT, the *New York Times* published an article, *A Flood of Troubled Soldiers Is in the Offing, Experts Predict* by Scott Shane (2004). Shane's article is one of the earliest attempts to increase public awareness of the traumas being experienced in the GWOT and how they are impacting the soldiers returning from combat. He quotes Stephen L. Robinson, a 20 year Army veteran as saying, "There's a train coming that's packed with people who are going to need help for the next 35 years." It has been nearly 10 years since this article and evidence shows many metaphoric trains have arrived with more than two million passengers.

In a doctoral study conducted at the Command and General Staff College, Shea (2010) interviewed faculty members and eleven Army officers to learn more about their personal experiences and effects of combat stress in a learning environment. The faculty members reported that students are increasingly short-tempered, are more likely to engage in arguments, and demonstrate an overall increase of stress in the classroom. The students interviewed confirmed the increase in stress attending an academic program. One faculty member expressed concern for students who conceal their stress and difficulties. One of the interviewed students also attended a civilian university and reported the civilians as not understanding the war or the "real world outside the classroom" and that they "took a very academic approach, as if the academic approach will always solve the problem" (p. 89). The student felt he was negatively affected by the civilian university experience. Overall, Shea found that students felt their combat related stress did negatively impact their learning (Shea, 2010). Shea (2010) concluded that "the findings and outcomes from this case study might serve as the foundation for a longitudinal research inquiry using other commonly accepted survey and research practices (p. 160). Though

many researchers have sought to learn about the 2.2 million military members who fought in the Global War on Terrorism since 9/11, no longitudinal studies of this nature have been conducted.

Problem Statement

Though much has been revealed from multiple studies since 9/11, we still know very little about how combat experiences affect military combat veterans and their ability to participate in adult education. Educational researchers have explored college funding and enrollment, combat veterans with disabilities, and even the social issues of transitioning into the civilian community on campus (DiRamio, 2008; DiRamio & Jarvis, 2009, and 2011; Driscoll & Strauss, 2009; Herrmann et al., 2009 and 2011; Slone & Freedman, 2008). However, very little research could be found that asked specific questions regarding combat veterans' classroom experiences or difficulties learning and completing assignments.

Though there is research using instruments designed to measure combat experience, depression, PTSD, and resilience, little could be found that directly asked combat veterans how their combat experience affects them every day, particularly in the adult learning environment. There may be other soldiers who have suffered similar experiences as Brian Castner and may have the same negative impacts mentioned by the students interviewed by Shea (2010). Though Shea's study revealed important issues experienced by students through interviews, the findings lack empirical data and may not be representative of the larger population of students with combat experience. Empirical research was needed with a larger population sample to increase confidence in the findings.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to learn from military veteran students how their combat experience affects them in the classroom. Specifically it looked at the types of combat experiences they have and the types of physical and mental effects they report while attending and participating in educational learning activities. This research sought to gain insight into how combat experience influences the learning experience for GWOT military combat veterans who participate in an adult educational learning environment. It explored the types of combat experiences these students bring into that learning environment and how their participation in learning activities is affected.

Research Questions

The primary research question was, “In what ways does Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) combat experience affect combat veteran students while participating in an adult learning environment?” To answer this question the research solicited data from combat veteran students based on the following secondary questions:

1. What specific combat experiences do combat veteran students have?
2. What effects do combat veteran students report having?
 - a. Classroom Effects
 - b. Assignments, Reading, and Memory
 - c. Overall Effects
3. What types of coping activities are practiced by combat veteran students?
4. How much time is required to return to normal functioning when a triggering event is experienced?
5. Are there differences between Services?
 - a. Differences between Service branches (Army, Air Force, Marines, Navy, and Coast Guard).
 - b. Differences between Service Components (Active and Reserve).
6. Are there differences between combat deployments?
 - a. Differences between Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.
 - b. Differences between officers with one, two, and three or more deployments into combat.
 - c. Differences between officers with less than one year of combat experience, one to three years of combat experience, more than three but less than five years of combat experience, and more than five years of combat experience since 2001.
7. Are there differences between genders?
8. What personal recommendations do combat veterans have for educators?

Methodology

This study used a survey research model as described by Rea and Parker (2005) in *Designing & Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide*. A self-administered online survey technique using a web-based design was chosen. Consisting of mixed quantitative and

qualitative questions, this research sought to gain insight from experienced combat veterans into the effects of combat experience and combat trauma while attending an adult education program. Potential participants were invited through an e-mail with a link provided to access the survey. This allowed privacy for them to independently determine their level of participation.

The population chosen for this study was a group of military officers attending the Command and General Staff Officers' Course (CGSOC) of the Command and General Staff School (CGSS) located at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in the Command and General Staff College (CGSC). This population contained primarily Army military officers who were mostly Majors but may have contained a small number of Captains and/or Lieutenant Colonels. Also included in this population were small numbers of sister military service officers (Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard). The students attending the residential CGSOC have an average 34-43 years of age, have completed at least a bachelor level education, and have served in the military Services about eleven to fourteen years. Each classroom group of students is stratified to create diversity in each group. A typical class group has 16 students with one female, one minority, one or two other Service officers, at least one international officer and the remaining students are Army officers. Most of these have served in combat at least once with many of them having completed multiple tours. Many Army Majors arrived almost directly out of combat. Surveys were sent to 990 students of which 235 completed the survey for a 24 percent response rate.

The survey "Combat Experience in the Classroom (2013)" had seven focus areas: 1) Demographics and Combat Deployments – Service Branch and Component, Number of GWOT Deployments and locations, total duration of combat experience, and Gender; 2) Combat Experience Types; 3) Classroom Effects – How combat experience effects classroom participation; 4) Effects on Assignments, Reading, and Memory; 5) The amount of time needed to return to normal after experiencing a triggering event and what the student can do to help this; 6) Overall Effects resulting from combat experiences; and 7) Informing Educators – an open-ended opportunity for participants to provide personal recommendations for educators to be aware of and consider when they have students with combat experiences.

Questions regarding specific combat experiences were developed from combining research questions used by Hoge et al. (2004) and the RAND (2008) study. Included in the survey were modified questions from the PTSD Checklist – Military Version (PCL-M for DSM-

IV) (Weathers, Huska, & Keane, 1994). Some questions used in the Hoge et al. and RAND studies are the same or similar to questions found in the Combat Exposure Scale (Keane et al., 1989), The Mississippi Scale Military Version (Keane, Caldwell, & Taylor, 1988), and the Deployment Risk and Resilience inventory (King, King, & Vogt, 2003). Also, a question regarding sexual assault was also asked to determine if military sexual trauma had been experienced. “Based on VA’s 2002 national MST surveillance data from approximately 1.7 million VA patients, about 22% of women and 1% of men have experienced MST” (VA, 2004, p. 3). According to this VA publication, exposure to the violence of sexual trauma can affect health, is associated with higher rates of psychological distress, PTSD, depression and substance abuse. “Acknowledging the sexual trauma history can be validating” for MST patients (VA, 2004, p. 7).

Thousands of combat veterans have returned from combat experience and are re-entering daily living environments throughout the United States. Many will seek to continue their education through military and civilian institutions. Their unique experiences may impact the learning environments in which they participate. Though this study focused on one institution in which learning environments with combat experienced students occur, the results may have implication for other military educational facilities and public education arenas where combat experienced students participate in the learning environment.

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

There were four key assumptions to the research:

1. Due to the confidentiality provided through the web-based survey, it was assumed that the participants would be completely honest in responding.
2. It was assumed that officers attending CGSOC would report having effects resulting from their combat experiences.
3. It was assumed that there would be significant differences across Services.
4. It was assumed that there would be significant differences between combat deployments.

Limitations

The demographics of the students with combat versus non-combat experience in CGSOC are disproportional when compared to civilian adult education settings. Civilian adult education settings would not likely have primarily combat experienced students in their student population. Future CGSOC classes will return to a mix of combat and non-combat experienced students. However, for this research there were five key limitations:

1. The perceptions of officers attending CGSOC may not reflect the experiences, attitudes and opinions of enlisted military students participating in professional military education.
2. The perceptions of officers attending CGSOC may not reflect the experiences, attitudes and opinions of officers attending non-military adult education settings.
3. The perceptions of officers attending CGSOC may not reflect the experiences, attitudes and opinions of enlisted military students attending non-military adult education settings.
4. The perceptions of officers attending CGSOC may not reflect the experiences, attitudes and opinions of individuals who are no longer active duty and are attending non-military adult education settings as a civilian.
5. The classroom environment in CGSC does not adequately represent the typical classroom environment in traditional universities.

Definitions

The following definitions are used for the purposes of this research.

1. Active Components – Active duty military service members who are not members of the Reserves Components. This includes: Army, Air Force, Marines, Navy, and Coast Guard.
2. Casualty – Any person who is lost to the organization by having been declared dead, duty status – whereabouts unknown, missing, ill, or injured. (DoD JP 4-02).
3. Combat Experiences – Experiences while deployed to a combat assignment during which individuals fought.
4. Combat and Operational Stress – The expected and predictable emotional, intellectual, physical, and/or behavioral reactions of an individual who has been exposed to stressful events in a war or stability operations. (DoD JP 4-02).
5. Combat Veteran – for the purpose of this research a combat veteran is an individual who, while on active duty, experienced combat. The expected combat experience is the combat

experienced in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) campaigns. This definition includes regular active duty military members, reserve and guard individuals regardless of whether they are currently active duty or discharged civilian veterans.

6. Deployment – The rotation of forces into and out of an operational area. (DoD JP 3-35).
7. Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) – Includes Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) campaigns.
8. GWOT Veteran – An individual who served on active duty in a GWOT campaign which includes OEF, OIF, and/or OND.
9. Reserve Components – The Armed Forces of the United States Reserve Components consists of: a. the Army National Guard of the United States; b. the Army Reserve; c. the Navy Reserve; d. the Marine Corps Reserve; e. the Air National Guard of the United States; f. the Air Force Reserve; and g. the Coast Guard Reserve. Also called RC. (DoD JP 4-05).
10. Stressor – A stressor is anything in the outside world that knocks one out of homeostatic balance, and the stress-response is what one’s body does to reestablish homeostasis (Sapolsky, 2004).

Significance of the Research

Educational institutions across the United States have experienced growing numbers of students who are GWOT veterans. These numbers will continue to grow as more of them transition back into life after combat. More than two million warriors have served in the GWOT. The 2008 RAND study suggests that more than 600,000 of them will return with varying levels of combat trauma leading to PTSD, major depression, TBI, or potentially all three. Using the anticipated 41.9 percent calculation of veterans who will attend a college or university determined by Hermann, Hopkins, Wilson and Allen (2009) in *Educating Veterans in the 21st Century*, the adult education community can anticipate more than 250,000 students with significant lingering issues resulting from their combat experience.

Still more will arrive with other issues resulting from the prolonged stress experienced by GWOT veterans. These military veterans will show up in classrooms throughout the United States. It is important that faculty understand the characteristics of these adult learners and how their experiences shape classroom interactions. This study collected information on how combat

experience affects combat veterans' participation in learning activities and assignments, how their memory may be affected, and overall changes resulting from their combat experiences. The data gathered provides insight into the challenges and the overall difficulties combat experienced students face while participating in higher education activities after combat. An awareness of these challenges may inform curriculum development and provide faculty and facilitators the understanding necessary to create a learning environment that decreases the negative consequences of combat experience and increases positive educational experiences.

Summary

Chapter one provided an overview of military combat experienced veterans and their service to our country during the GWOT. The lingering effects of combat experiences while attending adult education were discussed. This new group of learners entering colleges, universities, and other adult learning environments come with their unique combat experiences and special considerations faculty must be aware of in order to create the best possible learning environment to meet their educational needs. Previous research has sought to meet their enrollment, financial, and even some social needs on college campuses. Research regarding how their combat experiences specifically impacts their learning and participation in the learning environment was scarce or absent. Discussion in this chapter identified the need to develop an instrument to collect information directly from combat experienced veterans regarding their experiences while conducting assignments and other classroom activities.

Chapter two provides a review of the Global War on Terrorism, the numbers of veterans entering our communities and schools, and the lingering effects their combat experiences may have on their ability to participate in adult learning environments.

Chapter 2 - Review of the Literature

I am alone in my full bed.

My wife is alone in our full bed too. Her husband, the father of her children, never came back from Iraq. When I deployed the first time she asked her grandmother for advice. Her grandfather served in Africa and Europe in World War II. Her grandmother would know what to do.

“How do I live with him being gone? How do I help him when he comes home?” my wife asked.

“He won’t come home,” her grandmother answered. “The war will kill him one way or the other...” (Castner, 2012, p. 90)

Introduction

The Global War on Terror (GWOT) began with Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) on October 7, 2001 in Afghanistan. Continuing the GWOT, United States (U.S.) and coalition forces launched Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) on March 20, 2003 and seized Baghdad. After years of attempting to establish a democratic Iraqi government, the U.S. military forces implemented a counterinsurgency strategy known as “the surge” which lasted over three years and ended U.S. combat operations on September 1, 2010. Operation New Dawn (OND) was then established which kept military troops in Iraq to advise Iraqi security forces until the “final withdrawal on December 15, 2011” (DMDC-DCAS, 2013).

Figure 2-1 GWOT Map

**(GWOT)
Global War
on
Terror
(OIF, OEF & OND
Combined)**



https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/casualties_gwt_combined.xhtml

Following the events of 9/11, more than 2.2 million men and women deployed into combat to support the GWOT (DMDC, 2013).

Table 2-1 Service Members Deployed by Branch of Service and Component as of 2010

Component	Army	Navy	Air Force	Marine Corps	Coast Guard	TOTAL
Regular	608,634	323,701	280,182	219,335	4,813	1,436,665
National Guard	298,728	N/A	79,777	N/A		378,505
Reserves	173,825	60,161	54,632	42,316	1,271	332,205
TOTAL	1,081,187	383,862	414,591	261,651	6,084	2,147,375

In contrast with the Army and Air Force, the Navy and Marine Corps do not have National Guard components. Entire file contained 2,147,398, but 23 had an unknown component. Source: Defense Manpower Data Center. (IOM, 2013, p. 32)

According to the *Total Military Personnel and Dependent End Strength by Service, Regional, and Country* published by the Department Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC, 2013) as of December 31, 2013, nearly 40,000 military individuals remain in the region labeled as undistributed. “Undistributed includes Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait and Republic of Korea and any unknown/classified locations.” The Veterans Benefits Activity (VBA) Office (2012) published the *VA Benefits Activity; Veterans Deployed to the Global War on Terror* showing a total of 1,663,954 U.S. veterans have deployed to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) and have now separated from military service (see table 2-2).

Table 2-2 GWOT Veterans by Branch of Service

Branch of Service	Reserve Guard	Active Duty	Total
Air Force	119,930	172,391	292,321
Army	459,945	399,484	859,321
Coast Guard	2,013	5,355	7,368
Marine Corps	47,542	172,847	220,389
Navy	43,901	232,653	276,554
Other	12	157	169
Unknown	2,374	4,150	6,524
Total matched to VA systems	675,717	987,037	1,662,754
Unable to match to VA systems	521	679	1,200
Total	676,238	987,716	1,663,954

Note: Veterans’ branch of Service was obtained from VA’s BIRLS system, which stores information for up to three periods of service. The branch of Service associated with the most recent service date was used for the chart above.
Prepared by: VBA Office of Performance Analysis & Integrity Revised: November, 2012 Public Domain

Most GWOT veterans were regular active duty military members who served the military as their primary career (VBA, 2012). When returned from combat, most were likely assigned to normal duty within the military where they continued to be surrounded by comrades until their active duty commitment ended or they retired. This gave them time to be around others who shared their combat experience and provided continued comradeship as they transitioned to life

after combat. However, at least 676,238 of combat veterans were Reserve and Guard members (VBA, 2012). Some were able to retain their active Reserve status and received active duty assignments while others were separated from the military immediately upon returning from combat. They quickly transitioned back to civilian careers and life where they may have found themselves alone in their experiences with no comrade support.

Consequent to the 2013 sequestration and budget in the Department of Defense more GWOT combat experienced veterans may be involuntarily separated from their military careers (McLeary, 2012; Ricks, 2013; Maze, 2013). Regardless of remaining on active duty or separating from the military, all of these combat experienced men and women are re-entering day to day life. Nearly half of them seek adult educational programs to improve their military careers or to facilitate their transition (Sitrin & Ryder, 2013). This large group of learners has an impact on the adult educational environment. Many of these learners suffer challenges as they enter into colleges and universities. While pointing out the transition issues veterans experience when they enter the college campus, Hermann et al. (2009) also point out that the physical and emotional state of the veteran may affect academic performance.

The physical and social environments, as well as a person's ability to respond to the physical and social environments also affect the cognitive processes. Thus, it will not come as a surprise to any reader that any wound, illness, or disorder experienced by service members can make the educational process more difficult. Medical problems of veterans may constitute temporary or permanent educational disabilities... Thus, understanding the disabilities of veterans may help professors, administrators, and students appreciate the problems of veterans with who they interact (Hermann et al., 2009, p. 138-9).

Student Veterans: A National Survey Exploring Psychological Symptoms and Suicide Risk, a study conducted by Rudd, Goulding, and Bryan (2011) in which surveys were administered to college and university veteran students nationwide, found 20 percent of participants had a plan for committing suicide. Ackerman, DiRamio, and Garza Mitchell (2009) conducted research to investigate how combat veterans transition into college campus life as students. Ackerman et al. (2009) pointed out that "the experience of war makes those who fight a

special group within the general population” (p. 12). The War on Terror began in 2001. “Given what we have learned about assisting the members of special needs student populations to achieve their educational goals, it would be a disservice to treat veterans as if they were invisible” (p. 12). Ackerman et al. learned that “combat veterans who become students represent a population with special needs and that there are ways for campus personnel to work with these students to effectively meet those needs” (p. 12) They also provided principles as guidelines. The overarching principle declares, “There is an urgent need to share best practices, to exchange ideas, and to conduct research that will provide campuses with the information needed to promote the academic achievement of veterans who are students” (Ackerman et al., 2009, p. 13). Rumann and Hamrick (2009) explain that “if veterans are not well represented among campus faculty members and administrators, and if these individuals have little firsthand or systematic knowledge of military culture and the potential impact of wartime service on service members, it may complicate campus efforts to serve student veterans and facilitate successful transitions for veterans” (p. 30).

College and University Enrollment

Taylor, Morin, Parker, et al. with the Pew Research Center for Social and Demographic Trends published the *The Military-Civilian Gap: War and Sacrifice in the Post-9/11 Era* report showing that “about eight-in-ten active-duty military personnel are high school graduates or have completed at least a year of college or other postsecondary training. Nearly two-in-ten (17.9%) are college graduates or have an advanced degree... Officers are far better educated than the typical enlisted man or woman. More than eight-in-ten officers are college graduates (51.3%) or have an advanced degree (34.7%) while 9.3% have less than a bachelor degree” (Taylor et al., 2011). Taylor et al. (2011) also found that although today’s military are more educated, they indicate further interest in continuing their education and cite the educational benefits as an important reason they joined the military. They explain:

Recent veterans are more likely than those from earlier eras to say they joined to get educational benefits (75% vs. 55% say it was an important reason), Enlisted personnel also are significantly more likely than officers to cite education benefits as an important reason they joined the military (61% vs. 42%), in large part

because commissioned officers are more likely to have completed college (Taylor et al., 2011, p. 33).

About 42 percent of officers who cited education benefits will likely pursue graduate degree programs. The VBA (2012) reported 1,146,276 GWOT veterans received education benefits for participating in some sort of adult education since September 11, 2001. The majority of them attended college seeking a degree (See table 2-3).

Table 2-3 Education Program Participation among GWOT Veterans since 9/11

Type of Training	Chapter 33	Chapter 30	Chapter 1606	Chapter 1607	Total
Graduate	52,913	28,982	10,097	9,175	101,167
Under Graduate	227,726	160,300	116,964	48,931	553,921
Junior College	171,110	124,262	73,893	26,417	395,682
Non-college Degree	35,215	41,678	11,520	7,093	95,506
Total	486,964	355,222	212,474	31,616	1,146,276
Note: This data is based on DMDC separations through May 01, 2012, compared to VA records as of September 30, 2012. (VBA, 2012) Public Domain					

In *Educating Veterans in the 21st Century*, the percentage of GWOT veterans who attend college was estimated to be 41.9 percent, an increase compared to prior war veterans (Hermann et al., 2009, p. 7). More recently, however, according to the *Valuation of the Education Benefits Fund* report dated September 30, 2011 and published in January 2013 by the DoD Office of the Actuary, a total of 1,465,311 men and women are now eligible for education benefits (Sitrin & Ryder, 2013).

Table 2-4 Education Benefit Payment Projections (Sitrin & Ryder, 2013)

Fiscal Year	Chapter 30/33	Chapter 1606	Chapter 1607	Category III	Total
2012	\$90,420,136	\$165,232,743	\$77,900,501	\$1,366,885	\$334,920,265
2013	\$90,591,879	\$160,971,316	\$54,132,749	\$1,200,666	\$307,076,611
2014	\$104,973,965	\$157,193,677	\$39,549,815	\$1,054,661	\$302,772,118
2015	\$106,565,915	\$157,383,051	\$30,784,153	\$926,410	\$295,659,528
2016	\$99,339,823	\$159,896,446	\$30,570,840	\$813,755	\$290,620,863
2017	\$90,577,624	\$162,470,163	\$34,689,831	\$0	\$287,737,618
2018	\$81,976,170	\$165,105,648	\$32,271,512	\$0	\$279,353,331
2019	\$74,148,488	\$167,804,386	\$31,148,919	\$0	\$273,101,793
2020	\$66,670,614	\$170,567,893	\$30,410,838	\$0	\$267,649,345
2021	\$59,602,276	\$173,397,725	\$30,612,565	\$0	\$263,612,565
2022	\$52,896,234	\$176,295,472	\$31,575,885	\$0	\$260,767,591
2023	\$47,011,205	\$179,262,766	\$33,126,268	\$0	\$259,400,239

Because of higher college participation and number of veterans qualified for educational benefits, the actuaries projected that more than 300 million dollars will be needed to fund the military education benefits for 2013 and again in 2014. Though the numbers are projected to decline over the years that follow, the total spending anticipated constitutes a substantial enrollment future of combat veterans in adult education (Sitrin & Ryder, 2013).

Adult Learning Environment

The adult learning environment is a critical element in the learning process. According to Hansman (2001), “learning is not something that happens, or is just inside the head, but instead is shaped by the context, culture, and tools in the learning situation” (p. 43). “Adults want to be successful learners” (Wlodkowski, 1999, p. 13). According to Wlodkowski, they also “need to connect who they are with what they learn” (p. 12). Brookfield and Preskill (2005) support this in saying that “building connections, both personal and intellectual, is at the heart of discussion” (p. 28). In *Discussion as a Way of Teaching*, Brookfield and Preskill (2005) go on to explain that “the forefront of discussion is the analysis of experience” and that a good teacher encourages students to talk about the experiences that have shaped how they think and act (p. 30). Shor (1992) argues that “without active student participation in the making of knowledge, the classroom will remain a boring place...” (p. 104).

“When learners know that the having and sharing of ideas is a sincerely respected norm in the learning environment, they will be more likely to expose their thinking” (Wlodkowski, 1999, p. 62). The first guideline Wlodkowski defines as necessary is that “we create a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment” (p. 60). Duke (1977) explains that “before students will learn, they must feel good about their learning environment” (p. 268). Thus, as stated by Goodman (1995), “It is important to create a safe environment where students can listen to new information and points of view, as well as share their own questions. Students need to feel that they will not be attacked or ridiculed by other students--or the teacher” (p. 47).

Understanding the dynamics of various learning environments and how participants experience them is critical toward creating learning environments that support students’ needs as articulated by Hansman (2001), Duke (1977), and Goodman (1995). “The design of powerful learning environments, in which instructional conditions are aligned with the cognitive architecture, requires understanding of the learner characteristics that affect the underlying

knowledge structures and their interactions with the learning task” (Paas & Kester, 2006, p. 282). Understanding specifically how combat experienced students experience these environments is even more critical. “In addition to increasing the diversity desirable in any student body, the veteran population brings a rich and unique set of experiences to the classroom” (Hermann et al., 2009, p. 174).

Trials of Homecoming

Dr. Jonathan Shay is a staff psychiatrist in the Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Boston. Treating Vietnam War veterans inspired him to write. In the first of his two books, *Achilles in Vietnam*, Shay (2003) takes us through an exploration of the effects of serving in combat, the trauma experienced by individuals who served in the Vietnam War, and the persistent mental and physical afflictions experienced long after they leave combat. He furthers this exploration with *Odysseus in America* (2002) to discuss the trials of homecoming for veterans of combat trauma. He does this using the literary work of Homer’s *Iliad*. This well-known story provides poetic accounts of war, leadership, combat, and the trauma of such experiences. Shay (2003) juxtaposes the *Iliad* with accounts of Vietnam veterans who have confided in him through the Veterans Improvement Program and in so doing provides examples of leadership and heroism as well as the impact of betrayal and trauma resulting from war.

Through the *Odyssey*, we gain further understanding of the difficulties veterans experience with returning home and to civilian life. Though the location has changed from Vietnam, veterans of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) experienced many of the same traumas. As Shay (2003) pointed out early in his analogical use of the *Iliad*, the experience of trauma and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms have been prevalent in combat through centuries of war regardless of era or location. Though Shay (2003) argues that primary issues and typical symptoms have remained the same, there are differences between the GWOT and previous wars.

The GWOT campaigns experienced a higher proportion of deployed forces, longer deployments, and fewer breaks in between (RAND, 2008). The casualty rates were historically lower than in earlier prolonged wars due to advances in medical technology and body armor that increased survival from injuries that would have otherwise caused death in previous wars. “However, casualties of a different kind are beginning to emerge—invisible wounds, such as

mental health conditions and cognitive impairments resulting from deployment experiences” (RAND, 2008, p. xix). These warriors experienced higher levels of ambiguity in a battlefield that has no line (Hoge, 2010). The enemy was ill defined and danger lurked around every corner every minute of the day. Explosives were used in new ways that were more powerful, could be activated by cell phones, and could send electrical shock waves through nearby soldiers causing Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). With the advent of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), even trash on the side of the road was a threat (Castner, 2012). Many soldiers died after having run over an explosive device which tore through the bottom of their unarmored vehicle. Suicide bombers threatened military checkpoints. GWOT warriors had to maintain constant vigilance of their surroundings at all times and in all places. There was neither front nor rear of the battlefield and no place of rest (Oakley & Proctor, 2012).

According to Shay (2003), “The enemy does severe damage to a part of mental function that is critical to the maintenance of social trust: the trustworthiness of perception... Prolonged contact with the enemy in war destroys the soldier’s confidence in his own mental functions Without confidence in one’s own mental functions, ordinary economic, political, and domestic life becomes virtually impossible (p. 34-35). In *Educating Veterans in the 21st Century*, Hermann et al. (2009) point out that physical or emotional injury can interfere with veterans’ ability to respond to the physical and social environment and affect their cognitive processes. The adult educational classroom is both a physical and social environment that requires cognitive participation. Aside from trust issues, war veterans may have other persistent challenges such as the physical side effects of prolonged stress, continuing elevated stress levels, family adjustment, financial difficulties, and the challenges of reintegrating into normal American life upon their return from war.

The Pew Research Center study found that 44 percent of post-9/11 veterans reported difficulty readjusting to civilian life. The study also found that “the challenges veterans face upon returning to civilian life are often linked to experiences they had in combat” (Taylor et al., 2011, p. 1). The research team found that more than half of the post-9/11 combat veterans had emotionally traumatic or distressing experiences. These experiences have left them with resulting challenges. Taylor et al. (2011) found a “strong link” between wartime experiences and readjustment difficulties. “Two-thirds (67%) of post-9/11 combat veterans who had traumatic experiences say their readjustment to civilian life after the military was difficult. Among veterans

who did not have these types of experiences, only three-in-ten (31%) say their re-entry to civilian life was difficult” (p. 1).

Colleges and Universities must understand how these challenges affect combat veterans’ educational participation and learning. The faculty should be able to recognize when a veteran student may be at risk, requires intervention, and how to enact that intervention. The Pew Research Center study also asked civilians how well the American people understand the military challenges. They found that only 27 percent say they do so very/fairly well. The veterans have even less confidence and felt only 21 percent understand their challenges very/fairly well (Taylor et al., 2011). A greater understanding of the challenges combat veterans experience is needed.

Combat Veterans

Betrayal of Thémis

To understand a combat veteran’s challenges one must first understand how war can destroy one’s beliefs. Shay (2003) begins this exploration of war veterans, in *Achilles in Vietnam*, by first understanding the soldier as an American raised with an image of thémis. Shay uses the word thémis to describe “the whole sweep of a culture’s definition of right and wrong...moral order, convention, normative expectations, ethics, and commonly understood social values” (p. 5). “Normal adults wrap thémis around themselves as a mantle of safety in the world. Every trauma narrative pierces our adult cloak of safety; it challenges the rightness of thémis and leaves us terrified and disoriented” (p. 5). Shay goes on to explain what happens when this safety is penetrated. “When ruptures are too violent between the social realization of ‘what’s right’ and the inner thémis of ideals, ambitions, and affiliations, the inner thémis can collapse” (p. 37). This collapse can cause what Shay refers to as ‘the undoing of character’. “Our culture has raised us to believe that good character stands reliably between the good person and the possibility of horrible acts” (Shay, 2003, p. 31). Castner (2012) describes one such event as, “The first time someone tried to kill me, I experienced a predictable flood of emotions... I was not expecting to be confused. Why would they be trying to kill me, I thought. Don’t they know it’s me” (p. 128)!

Shay (2003) further explains how war and combat trauma can break down the soldier’s thémis and ultimately his character. The breaking down of thémis begins as the soldier becomes

aware that he is 'held captive' between the enemy and his own Army. He cannot flee in any direction.

The mind, the heart, the soul of the combat soldier become the focus of competing attempts to enslave... The social Institution of war creates total captivity with opposing armies working in perfect harmony to keep the soldiers in place and at each other (p. 36).

This entrapment sets the conditions in which the soldier's *thémis* begins to decay. With every lie, euphemism, failed weapon, undelivered food, non-supplied ammunition, friendly fire, fragging, every death at the hands of an arrogant supervisor the *thémis* erodes.

Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) were unique in that together "they mark the first time that the United States has attempted to fight an extended conflict with a post-Cold War all-volunteer force" (RAND, 2008, p. 22). They were not unique, however, in that "the extended nature of the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq has subjected the U.S. military to demands that, arguably, it was not sized, resourced, or configured to meet at the time" (p. 23). Resources were stretched and cycled through both conflicts. The deployments for military members were more frequent, lasted longer, and often came with little or no break between them. These men and women became victims to the OPTEMPO, a term used to "measure the pace of an operation or operations..." (Garamone, 1999, p. 1). "After betrayal of *thémis* in warfare, an us-against-them mentality takes hold in which everyone, no matter how close before, is either an absolute ally or an absolute enemy" (Shay, 2003, p. 25). All other attachments or commitments, whether to comrades or family, are severed. Various types of events can lead to the betrayal and breakdown of *thémis*. Grief at the death of a special comrade provides a myriad of problems the soldier must cope with.

Grief and the Berserk

"We can never fathom the soldier's grief if we do not know the human attachment which battle nourishes and then amputates... Combat calls forth a passion of care among men who fight beside each other..." (Shay, 2003, p. 39). The death of a friend in arms has the potential to break "the survivor's life into unhealable halves, with everything before his death radically severed from everything after" (p. 39). One of the most difficult issues with this is the ability to express this grief. During the Vietnam War it was not uncommon for the soldier to be told to "Stuff those

tears!” implying that emotions of love and grief are signs of weakness. “There was no safe time to mourn” (p. 59).

Shay (2003) provides a section in *Achilles in Vietnam* in which he explains how soldiers will rapidly transform grief into rage. He explains that many of the veterans they treat have replaced grief with a rage that not only lasts years but becomes an entrenched way of being. “Grief turns the attention of the survivor inward to feelings, memories, and imagined what-if scenarios; attention to the present sensory world is largely shut down” (Shay, 2003, p. 59). Schiraldi (2000) supports Shay’s argument in *The Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Sourcebook* and explains that “continually avoiding the normal, healthy feelings of grief keeps unresolved memories of loss in active memory, emotionally charged, and likely to intrude” (p. 236). It is important to process the loss of comrades.

Hoge et al. (2004), in *Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, Mental Health Problems and Barriers to Care*, reported that 22 percent of Army soldiers and 26 percent of Marines “Had a buddy shot or hit who was near you” (p. 19). The more current RAND (2008) study found 49.6 percent of surveyed individuals who served in OEF or OIF reported “having a friend who was seriously wounded or killed” (p. 97). Hoge et al. (2004) did not make it clear if “who was near you” meant proximity or fondness one might have for a friend. The RAND study team removed some of the qualifiers and vagueness.

Many survivors carry with them guilt for surviving. They relive the incident over and over trying to determine what they could have done to prevent it or how they should have been the one to die. Whether there was a basis or not there exists a self-blame for the death of the special comrade. Shay (2003) explained how the guilt would be so overwhelming that some men would take their own lives. Others, feeling the stigma of suicide would instead pronounce a death sentence upon themselves in battle. “These sought the honorable compromise of death in battle and went berserk. They neither expected to survive nor wanted to. The few who inexplicably survived returned to civilian life with the double torment of death-deserving guilt and a ready capacity to go berserk” (p. 73). In the following passage, Shay (2003) explains the onset of the berserk state.

The berserk state is the most important and distinctive element of combat trauma. Everything that has gone before – detachment from moral and social restraints by prior betrayal of ‘what’s right’,

grief and guilt at the death of the special comrade who has wrongfully substituted for the survivor, the sense of being already dead and deserving to be dead – all now converge on the berserk state (p. 75).

The bereavement of a fallen comrade triggers a “Don’t get sad. Get even!” mentality (Shay, 2003, p. 81). This state of mind could quickly lead a man to act reckless, crazy and insane, devoid of fear, enraged, as an animal. He cuts himself off from all human community, “blind to everything but his destructive aim” (p. 86). Through this quest of revenge the dead is revived, helplessness is denied, and justice in the world is affirmed. “He has lost all concern for the safety of others, as much as for his own. After the death of this veteran’s special comrade, even the rest of the team ceased to matter” (p. 90). The Hoge et al. (2004) study also found that 48 percent of Army soldiers and 65 percent of Marines reported “Being responsible for the death of an enemy combatant” and 14 percent of Army soldiers and 28 percent of Marines reported “Being responsible for the death of a noncombatant” (p. 19). The RAND study found that 5.2 percent reported “Being responsible for the death of a civilian” (RAND, 2008, p. 97).

The berserk state has long term consequences beyond the pain and remorse that emerges after the berserking is over. “It is plain that the berserker’s brain and body function are as distant from everyday function as his mental state is from everyday thought and feeling” (Shay, 2003, p. 91). Combat elicits autonomic and endocrine hyperarousal in response to emergencies. “Adrenal hormones reduce sensibility to pain and fatigue and sharpen the sense” (p. 91). Hormones are also released by the adrenal glands in response to terror and pain. The human body is not adapted to constant emergency mobilization. Sapolsky (2004) explains several physical reactions that occur during stress, such as growth and tissue repair are curtailed, sexual drive decreases, females are less likely to carry pregnancies to term, and immunity is inhibited. These along with psychological reactions have long term consequences (Sapolsky, 2004). “These physical changes due to prolonged combat “deaden pain, hunger, and desire, resulting in an emotional coldness and indifference” (Shay, p. 92).

The berserk state “imparts emotional deadness and vulnerability to explosive rage to his psychology and a permanent hyperarousal to his physiology– hallmarks of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in combat veterans” (p. 98). The berserker is hyperalert and “ready to see even the smallest novelty in the environment or in people as a sign of imminent attack” (Shay, 2003,

p. 93). Shay concluded that if the berserker survived he would suffer “lifelong psychological and physiological injury and is changed forever” (p. 98). The betrayal of ‘what’s right’ is, according to Shay (2003), “a conditioning event that prepares a soldier to go berserk” (p. 96). There may be recurrences of the berserk state in civilian life long after the war is over. “The killing of people, combatant or non-combatant, can for many men be a trying event, and sometimes an utterly devastating one. All the justifications in the world, legitimate or not, cannot sever them from their pain” (Driscoll & Straus, 2009, p. 42).

Types of Combat Experiences and Multiple Deployments

The Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) provided a variety of new experiences for warriors during combat. The 2003 study conducted by Hoge, Castro, Messer, et al. (2008) published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 2004 and republished in *The Army Medical Department Journal* used a survey to ask Army and Marine participants about their combat experiences. The study “investigated mental health outcomes among Soldiers and Marines who had taken part in the ground-combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan” (Hoge et al., 2004, p. 12). Results found that soldiers were more likely to meet criteria for major depression, PTSD, or alcohol misuse after they had deployed. The prevalence of PTSD was increased with greater frequency and intensity of combat. The combat experiences represented in the study are provided in Table 2-5. Another interesting finding of their research was the lack of trust for mental health professionals and how they would be viewed if they sought help. Many feared it would harm their career or cause their unit or leadership to treat them differently and have less confidence in them (Hoge et al., 2004).

Table 2-5 Combat Experiences Reported by Members of the U.S. Army and Marine Corps

Combat Experiences Reported by Members of the US Army and Marine Corps after Deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan*			
Experience	Army Group		Marine Group Iraq (N=815)
	Afghanistan (N=1962) Number/total number (%)	Iraq (N=894) Number/total number (%)	
Being attacked or ambushed	1139/1961 (58)	789/883 (89)	764/805 (95)
Receiving incoming artillery, rocket, or mortar fire	1648/1960 (84)	753/872 (86)	740/802 (92)
Being shot at or receiving small-arms fire	1302/1962 (66)	826/886 (93)	779/805 (97)
Shooting or directing fire at the enemy	534/1961 (27)	672/879 (77)	692/800 (87)
Being responsible for the death of an enemy combatant	229/1961 (12)	414/871 (48)	511/789 (65)
Being responsible for the death of a noncombatant	17/1961 (1)	116/861 (14)	219/794 (28)
Seeing dead bodies or human remains	771/1958 (39)	832/879 (95)	759/805 (94)
Handling or uncovering human remains	229/1961 (12)	443/881 (50)	455/800 (57)
Seeing dead or seriously injured Americans	591/1961 (30)	572/882 (65)	604/803 (75)
Knowing someone seriously injured or killed	850/1962 (43)	751/878 (86)	693/797 (87)
Participating in demining operations	314/1962 (16)	329/867 (38)	270/787 (34)
Seeing ill or injured women or children whom you were unable to help	907/1961 (46)	604/878 (69)	665/805 (83)
Being wounded or injured	90/1961(5)	119/870 (14)	75/803 (9)
Had a close call, was shot or hit, but protective gear saved you	†	67/879 (8)	77/805 (10)
Had a buddy shot or hit who was near you	†	192/880 (22)	208/797 (26)
Clearing or searching homes or buildings	1108/1961 (57)	705/884 (80)	695/805 (86)
Engaging in hand-to-hand combat	51/1961 (3)	189/876 (22)	75/800 (9)
Saved the life of a Soldier or civilian	125/1961 (6)	183/859 (21)	150/789 (19)

*Data exclude missing values, because not all respondents answered every question. Combat experiences are worded as in the survey.
†The question was not included in this survey. (Hoge et al., 2004, p. 11)

The RAND (2008) study, *Invisible Wounds of War*, adapted the combat experiences used by Hoge et al. (2003) to conduct a similar survey and found correlations between combat experiences and PTSD, Depression, or Traumatic Brain Injury in participants. They concluded that the “rates of exposure to specific types of combat trauma ranged from 5 to 50 percent, with high reporting levels for many traumatic events. Vicariously experienced traumas (e.g. having a friend who was seriously wounded or killed) were the most frequently reported” (RAND, 2008, p. 96). Thus, even vicariously experienced combat traumas have an impact (See Tables 2-6 and 2-7).

Table 2-6 Rates of Trauma Exposure in OEF/OIF

Rates of Trauma Exposure in OEF/OIF (N=1,965)			
Type of Combat Trauma	Weighted Percentage	95% CI LL	95% CI UL
Having a friend who was seriously wounded or killed	49.6	45.7	53.6
Seeing dead or seriously injured noncombatants	45.2	41.3	49.1
Witnessing an accident resulting in serious injury or death	45.0	41.1	48.9
Smelling decomposing bodies	37.0	33.3	40.7
Being physically moved or knocked over by an explosion	22.9	19.6	26.1
Being injured, not requiring hospitalization	22.8	19.2	26.3
Having a blow to the head from any accident or injury	18.1	15.1	21.1
Being injured, requiring hospitalization	10.7	8.2	13.1
Engaging in hand-to-hand combat	9.5	7.3	11.6
Witnessing brutality toward detainees/prisoners	5.3	3.3	7.3
Being responsible for the death of a civilian	5.2	3.0	7.4

NOTES: CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit (RAND, 2008, p. 97)

Table 2-7 Overall Rates of Probable PTSD, Major Depression, and TBI

Overall Rates of Probable PTSD, Major Depression, and TBI with Co-Morbidity (N=1,965)					
Condition	Weighted Percentage	95% CI LL	95% CI UL	Population LL	Population UL
Probable PTSD	13.8	11.1	16.5	181,000	270,000
Probable major depression	13.7	11.0	16.4	181,000	270,000
Probable TBI	19.5	16.4	22.7	269,000	372,000
Co-morbidity					
No condition	69.3	65.7	73.0	1,079,000	1,198,000
PTSD only	3.6	2.0	5.2	32,000	86,000
Depression only	4.0	2.4	5.5	40,000	91,000
TBI only	12.2	9.6	14.8	157,000	243,000
PTSD and depression	3.6	2.3	4.8	38,000	79,000
PTSD and TBI	1.1	0.6	1.7	10,000	27,000
TBI and depression	0.7	0.1	1.4	1,000	22,000
PTSD, depression, and TBI	5.5	3.6	7.4	58,000	121,000

NOTES: Based on 1.64 million individuals deployed to OEF/OIF, assuming that the rate found in the sample is representative of the population. CI=confidence interval; LL= lower limit; UL = upper limit. (RAND, 2008, p. 97)

The Institute of Medicine assembled a committee to address the tasks set out in legislation with the 2008 passage of the *National Defense Authorization Act* for fiscal year 2001 (PL 110-181). The committee published *Returning Home from Iraq and Afghanistan: Assessment of the Readjustment Needs of Veterans, Service Members, and Their Families* (IOM, 2013). The IOM (2013) started the report by describing the characteristics of the deployed and explained that, “by the end of 2010, the 2.15 million service members had been deployed an average of 1.7 times: 57% once, 27% twice, 10% three times, and 6% four or more times” (p. 46). The National Guard and Reserve members had fewer multiple deployments. “The average length of deployments was 7.7 months—from an average of 4.5 months in the Air Force to the

average of 9.4 months in the Army. The average cumulative length of deployments of multiple deployers was 16.9 months” (IOM, 2013, p. 46).

Table 2-8 Proportion of Deployed Service Members Deployed Multiple Times

Proportion of Deployed Service Members Deployed Multiple Times, by Branch of Service and Component, ^a as of 2010						
Component	Army, N (%) ^b	Navy, N (%) ^b	Air Force, N (%) ^b	Marine Corps, N (%) ^b	Coast Guard, N (%) ^b	TOTAL N (%) ^b
Regular	287,938 (47.3)	145,043 (44.8)	137,760 (49.2)	107,462 (48.9)	920 (19.1)	679,123 (47.3)
National Guard	88, 291 (29.6)	N/A	42,935 (53.8)	N/A	N/A	131,226 (34.7)
Reserves	57,201 (32.9)	20,876 (34.7)	28,164 (51.5)	9,943 (23.5)	203 (16.0)	116,387 (35.3)
TOTAL	433,430 (40.1)	165,919 (43.2)	208,859 (50.4)	117,405 (44.9)	1123 (18.5)	926,736 (43.2)

NOTE: Entire file contained 2,147,398, but 10 Air Force and one Marine Corps personnel had an unknown component.
^aIn contrast with the Army and Air Force, the Navy and Marine Corps do not have National Guard components.
^bN, number with multiple deployments within each group: % are cell percentages representing the percentage with multiple deployments in each group based on denominators in Table 3.1.
 SOURCE: Defense Manpower Data Center (IOM, 2013, p. 32)

Charles W. Hoge, M.D. Colonel, U.S. Army (Ret.), author of *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior*, participated in multiple studies regarding the types of combat experiences reported by military members who served in GWOT. In a more recent study published in the *Journal of Traumatic Stress* titled *PTSD Symptom Increases in Iraq-Deployed Soldiers: Comparison With Nondeployed Soldiers and Associations With Baseline Symptoms, Deployment Experiences, and Postdeployment Stress* by Vaterling, Proctor, Friedman, et al. (2010), the research team used the Deployment Risk and Resilience inventory (DRRI) which contains questions regarding experiences before, during, and after deployment. The PTSD CheckList (PCL) was also administered to determine if there were correlations between various types of combat experiences and PTSD symptoms. Their findings provided strong evidence that deployment to a contemporary war zone results in adverse mental health consequences that cannot be explained by preexisting symptoms. They found that “higher levels of stress during deployment translated to greater increases in PTSD symptom severity following deployment” (Vaterling et al., 2010, p. 17).

Stress

“There’s no doubt that stress can cause wear and tear, both psychologically and physically” (McEwen & Lasley, 2002, p.3). Whether people are stressed financially, stressed with too much work, stressed over children, or stress with the writing of educational papers, they

can all report some type of stress at some point in their lives. Thus, it is important to understand stress, how the body reacts to stress, the long term effects of stress, and how stress in combat differs from our daily life stresses. “Combat stress (historically termed soldier’s heart, shell shock, or battle fatigue) is a known and accepted consequence of warfare” (RAND, 2008, p. 4).

Dr. Robert M Sapolsky (2004), a professor of biology and neurology at Stanford who authored *Why Zebra’s Don’t Get Ulcers*, provides an easy guide to stress. He leads us understand how our brains and bodies respond to stress first by helping us understand the difference between human stressors and those of zebras (Sapolsky, 2004). The critical point of his book is described as follows:

If you are that zebra running for your life, or that lion sprinting for your meal, your body’s physiological response mechanisms are superbly adapted for dealing with such short-term physical emergencies. For the vast majority of beasts on this planet, stress is about a short-term crisis, after which it’s either over with or you’re over with (Sapolsky, 2004, p. 6).

Most of us can describe an event that made us jump or react rapidly whether from a child popping out to scare you or the car crash that almost happened. Sapolsky (2004) helps us understand that our immediate reactions to such surprises result from a disruption in our brain’s homeostasis. “A stressor is anything in the outside world that knocks you out of homeostatic balance, and the stress-response is what your body does to reestablish homeostasis” (Sapolsky, 2004, p. 6). He explains how we might quickly jump back when the child pops out to scare us but then we quickly realize there is no real danger and return to our homeostasis. Avoiding a car crash may trigger a bigger and longer lasting response. We might experience our heart racing and our hands shaking. It may take some time after the danger is gone for our heart to return to normal and our hands to stop shaking. These are examples of the short-term crisis type of stress. We recover quickly and soon forget about it (Sapolsky, 2004).

Though this may appear to be a return to homeostatic balance, Sapolsky (2004) explains the difference between homeostasis and allostasis. Unlike homeostasis which assumes a set balance such as temperature, allostasis accommodates change. Allostasis “recognizes that any given set point can be regulated in a zillion different ways, each with its own consequences... Allostasis is about the brain coordinating body-wide changes, often including changes in

behavior” (Sapolsky, 2004). McEwen and Lesley (2003), in *The End of Stress As we Know It*, informs us that “allostasis is produced by a swift and intricately organized system of communication. It links the brain, which perceives a novel or threatening situation; the endocrine system (chiefly the adrenal glands), which is primarily responsible for mobilizing the rest of the body); and the immune system for internal defense” (p. 6). This produces what has been commonly called fight-or-flight. This process prepares us by providing maximum energy to the parts of the body that are most needed to either fight or to take flight (McEwen & Lasley, 2003).

Stress-responses and allostasis are our natural ways of dealing with threats and surviving. In the *Clinician’s Guide to Treating Stress After War*, Whealin, DeCarvalho, and Vega (2008) explain how important is to understand how the brain and body responds to detecting and dealing with possible threats.

When we have gone through extreme stress—such as almost being killed or seeing other people get seriously injured—our brain makes changes to become more attuned to danger. In a war zone, our system adapted to surviving in that environment. Parts of our brain actually adapt to be able to detect danger and keep you alive. Any time our brain detects possible danger it can fire the alarms and get us ready to act—to keep us safe. (p. 21)

Similar to this explanation McEwen and Lasley (2003) explain further that, The stress response helps us react to an emergency and cope with change. To do so, it musters the brain, glands, hormones, immune system, heart, blood, and lungs. Whether we need to fight, stand firm, bolt to safety, or concentrate on a task at hand, the stress response provides the tools—energy, oxygen, muscle power, fuel, pain resistance, mental acuity, and a temporary bulwark against infection—all at a moment’s notice. (p. 4)

Sapolsky (2004) explains out that “a stressor can also be the anticipation of that happening. Sometimes we are smart enough to see things coming and, based only on anticipation, can turn on a stress-response as robust as if the event had actually occurred” (p. 6). This can cause your heart to race or your hands to shake even though nothing has happened yet. This likely happens to a zebra confronted by a lion that hasn’t attacked yet. “But unlike less

cognitively sophisticated species, we can turn on the stress-response by thinking about potential stressors that may throw us out of homeostatic balance far into the future” (p. 7). Thus, the stress-response can be activated simply by thinking about and expecting a physical or psychological insult.

Though stress-response or allostasis is necessary for survival, the reality is that if it is activated too often “the stress-response can become more damaging than the stressor itself” (Sapolsky, 2004, p. 13). When we respond to a stressor the brain automatically moves into survival mode and shuts down unnecessary functions of the body. If this happens too often we may reach a point in which we cannot turn off the stress-response at the end of a stressful event. The stress-response can eventually become damaging when we are unable to turn it off. “A large percentage of what we think of when we talk about stress-related diseases are disorders of excessive stress-responses” (Sapolsky, 2004, p. 16). “We carry our stress with us for a lifetime” (Bremnar, 2002, p. 3). Bremnar explains how our stress hormones cause us to “engrave the circumstances surrounding the life-threatening event in memory, by acting on brain areas that are involved in memory” (p. 4). This allows us to respond more effectively should we ever encounter a same or similar life-threatening event and maximize our survival. However, “the short-term survival response can be at the expense of long-term function... Surprisingly, the same biological systems that help us survive life threats can also damage the brain and the body” (Bremnar, 2002, p. 4).

When we consider the multiple life threatening situations experienced in Afghanistan and Iraq by military members who deployed multiple times to either or both we quickly realize the potential of long-term effects and possible damage to the brain and the body. Because a stressor can also be the anticipation of a life threatening event (Sapolsky, 2004), even those military members who did not directly experience a life threatening situation still suffered. Due to the quantity and length of deployments these individuals were in a constant state of stress with daily activation of allostasis.

“Two hormones vital to the stress-response... are epinephrine and norepinephrine, released by the sympathetic nervous system. Another important class of hormones in the response to stress is called glucocorticoids... Glucocorticoids are steroid hormones” (Sapolsky, 2004, p. 30). The results of prolonged stress, causes areas of the brain to function less efficiently, disconnect neural networks, and inhibit the growth of new neurons. “There is now evidence that

truly prolonged exposure to stress or glucocorticoids can actually kill hippocampal neurons” (p. 215).

Bremnar (2002) explains how “individuals exposed to repeated stress develop dysfunction in their stress response systems, and can no longer properly adapt to new stressors. Stress responses that are useful for short-term survival can be at the expense of long-term function” (p. 6). For some individuals, even when the stress is over, their systems are not able to recover and return to baseline which causes long-term exposure to adrenaline and cortisol. These excessive levels of stress hormones can interfere with the formation and retrieval of memories. “This may add even more stress by blocking the informational input needed to decide that a situation is not a threat” (McEwen & Lasley, 2003, p. 62). “Unchecked, extreme stress is an emotional and physical carnivore... The stress of combat debilitates far more warriors than are killed in direct, hostile action” (Grossman & Christensen, 2008, p. 4).

Physical and Psychological Injuries

A myriad of physical and psychological issues can result from the prolonged stress experienced in combat. “Stress-related disorders are associated with changes in brain structure and function in key areas associated with stress responses, fear learning, and extinction: the hippocampus, amygdala, prefrontal cortex (PFC), hypothalamus, and cerebellum” (Ursano et al., 2010, p. 79). According to the *Analysis of VA Health Care Utilization among Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) Veterans* released March 2013 by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), as of November 30, 2012 1,604,359 OEF/OIF/OND Veterans left active duty and became eligible for VA health care since FY 2002. Of those 915,945 (~57 percent) were former Active Duty troops and 688,414 (~43 percent) were Reserve and National Guard. Among all 1,604,359 separated OEF/OIF/OND Veterans, 899,752 (~56 percent) have obtained VA health care since FY 2002. The VA found fifteen categories of physical diagnoses among OEF/OIF/OND Veterans (see table 2-9) and nine categories of mental disorders in addition to PTSD evaluated at VA facilities since FY 2002 (see table 2-10). Many, if not most, of these diagnoses and disorders may be directly related to the long-term effects of prolonged elevated stress and excessive stress-response (VA, 2013).

Table 2-9 Number of Diagnoses among OEF/OIF/OND Veterans

Number of Diagnoses among OEF/OIF/OND Veterans		
Disease Category (ICD-9-CM Categories)	% OEF/OIF/OND (n=899,752)	
	Number*	Percent
Infectious and Parasitic Diseases (0100-139)	144,167	16.0
Malignant Neoplasms (140-209)	13,016	1.4
Benign Neoplasms (210-239)	64,424	7.2
Diseases of Endocrine/Nutritional/Metabolic Systems (240-279)	302,719	33.6
Diseases of Blood and Blood Forming Organs (280-289)	36,899	4.1
Mental Disorders (290-319)	486,015	54.0
Diseases of Nervous System/Sense Organs (320-389)	415,543	46.2
Diseases of Circulatory System (390-459)	198,140	22.0
Diseases of Respiratory System (460-519)	241,229	26.8
Diseases of Digestive System (520-579)	326,338	36.3
Diseases of the Genitourinary System (580-629)	142,687	15.9
Diseases of Skin (680-709)	199,803	22.2
Diseases of Musculoskeletal System Connective Tissue (710-739)	519,721	57.8
Symptoms, Signs and Ill Defined Conditions (780-799)	478,267	53.2
Injury/Poisonings (800-999)	267,407	29.7

* The total may be higher than 899,752 unique Veterans because a Veteran can have more than one diagnosis and each is entered separately in this table.
 VA Health Care Utilization among OEF/OIF/OND Veterans
 (Cumulative from 1st Qtr FY 2002 – 1st Qtr FY 2013, Released March 2013)

Table 2-10 Disorders among OEF/OIF/OND Veterans

Disorders ^a among OEF/OIF/OND Veterans Evaluated at VA Facilities since FY 2002 ^b	
Diagnosis (ICD-9-CM)	Number of OEF/OIF/OND Veterans ^c
Post-Traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (309.81) ^d	261,998
Depressive Disorders (311)	205,221
Neurotic Disorders (300)	181,892
Affective Psychoses (296)	123,772
Alcohol Dependence Syndrome (303)	59,081
Nondependent Abuse of Drugs (305) ^e	42,592
Special Symptoms, Not Elsewhere Classified (307)	36,523
Drug Dependence (304)	32,170
Specific Nonpsychotic Mental Disorder due to Organic Brain Damage (310)	30,441
Sexual Deviations and Disorders (302)	29,941

^aIncludes both provisional and confirmed diagnoses
^bThese are cumulative data since FY 2002. ICD-9-CM diagnoses used in these analyses are obtained from computerized administrative data. Although diagnoses are made by trained health care providers, up to one-third of initial diagnostic codes may not be confirmed because the diagnosis is provisional, pending further evaluation.
^cThe total will be higher than the 486,015 unique patients who received a diagnosis of a possible mental disorder. A Veteran may have more than one mental disorder diagnosis and each diagnosis is entered separately in this table.
^dThis row of data does not include a) information on PTSD from VA's Vet Centers, b) data from Veterans not enrolled for VA health care, or c) Veterans who received only a diagnosis of adjustment reaction, ICD-9-CM 309 (n=62,468).
^eThis category currently excludes Veterans who have a diagnosis of a) tobacco use disorder only, ICD-9-CM 305.1 (n=128,792); b) alcohol abuse only, ICD-9-CM 305.0, (n=33,625); or both tobacco use disorder and alcohol abuse, ICD-9-CM 305.0 and ICD-9-CM 305.1, (n+27,613).
 VA Health Care Utilization among OEF/OIF/OND Veterans
 (Cumulative from 1st Qtr FY 2002 – 1st Qtr FY 2013, Released March 2013)

The VA Health Care Utilization report provided a summary that explains, “Recent OEF/OIF/OND Veterans are presenting to VA with a wide range of health conditions. The three most common diagnoses of Veterans were musculoskeletal ailments (principally joint and back

disorders), mental disorders, and ‘Symptoms, Signs, and Ill-Defined Condition’ (VA, 2013, p. 11). It also pointed out that the 899,752 Veterans who accessed VA health care do not constitute a representative sample of all OEF/OIF/OND Veterans. The data does not include those who sought care at other VA, Department of Defense, or civilian facilities (VA, 2013). The RAND (2008) report and others like it caution that most Veterans do not seek mental health services and several hundred thousand Veterans may have undiagnosed and untreated PTSD, major depression, TBI or a combination.

Physical Injuries

Hoge et al. (2004), in the study on *Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, Mental Health Problems and Barriers to Care*, found the percentage of participants who had been deployed to Iraq who reported being wounded or injured was 11.6 percent as compared with only 4.6 percent for those who had been deployed to Afghanistan. The rates of PTSD were significantly associated with having been wounded or injured. MacGregor, Shaffer, Dougherty, et al. (2009) also found that those who had suffered battle injuries had higher rates of PTSD or other mental-health conditions. In a QUERI (Quality Enhancement Research Initiative) Fact Sheet titled “Polytrauma & Blast-Related Injuries (2012)” we learn that more than 54,000 OEF/OIF/ONF service members have been wounded in action or killed.

Because of improvements in body armor, as well as battle-site and acute trauma care, OEF/OIF service members are surviving beyond the acute phase of blast injuries. However, they are surviving with new and complex patterns of injuries that include: traumatic brain injury (TBI), traumatic limb amputation, nerve damage, burns, wounds, fractures, vestibular damage, and vision and hearing loss. Pain, mental health, and adjustment problems also are common. Because TBI is particularly prevalent among OEF/OIF/OND service members, it has been referred to as the ‘signature injury’ of these wars (VA QUERI, 2012).

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

“TBI is a common injury of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan” (IOM, 2013). The DOD-VA common definition of TBI is:

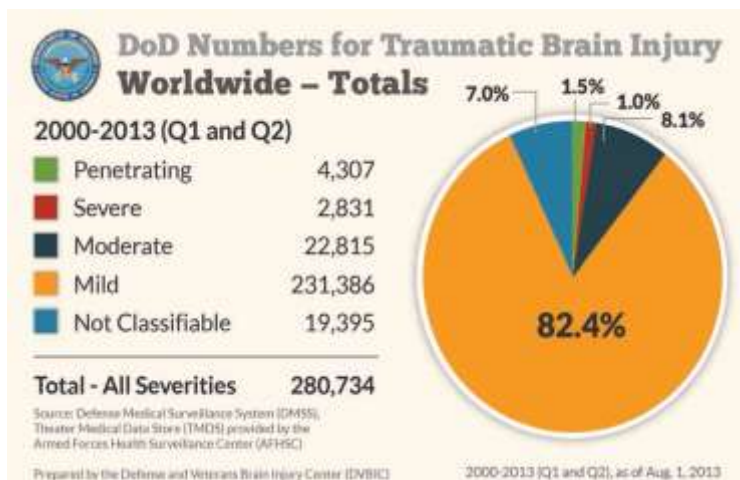
A traumatically induced structural injury and/or physiological disruption of brain function as a result of an external force that is indicated by new onset or worsening of at least one of the following clinical signs, immediately following the event:

- Any period of loss of or a decreased level of consciousness;
- Any loss of memory for events immediately before or after the injury;
- Any alteration in mental state at the time of the injury (confusion, disorientation, slowed thinking, etc.);
- Neurological deficits (weakness, loss of balance, change in vision, praxis, paresis/plegia, sensory loss, aphasia, etc.) that may or may not be transient;
- Intracranial lesion.

(CDC, 2008)

Figure 2-2 shows the total DoD Numbers for TBI in U.S. Forces reported in August 2013 by the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC).

Figure 2-2 TBI by severity in all armed forces (DVBIC, 2013, Public Domain)



The DVBIC (2013) report provides the following TBI definitions:

Concussion/Mild TBI is characterized by the following: A confused or disoriented state which lasts less than 24 hours; loss of

consciousness for up to 30 minutes; memory loss lasting less than 24 hours; and structural brain imaging (MRI or CT scan) yielding normal results.

Moderate TBI is characterized by the following: A confused or disoriented state which lasts more than 24 hours; loss of consciousness for more than 30 minutes, but less than 24 hours; memory loss lasting greater than 24 hours but less than seven days; and structural brain imaging yielding normal or abnormal results.

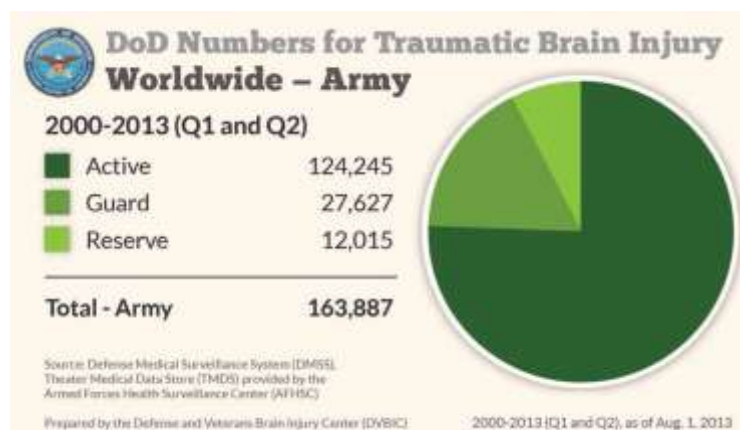
Severe TBI is characterized by the following: A confused or disoriented state which lasts more than 24 hours; loss of consciousness for more than 24 hours; memory loss for more than seven days; and structural brain imaging yielding normal or abnormal results.

Penetrating TBI, or open head injury, is characterized by the following: A head injury in which the dura mater, the outer layer of the meninges, is penetrated. Penetrating injuries can be caused by high-velocity projectiles or objects of lower velocity such as knives, or bone fragments from a skull fracture that are driven into the brain.

(DVBIC, 2013)

The Army makes up the majority of the DoD TBI numbers shown in figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3 TBI by severity in all Army (DVBIC, 2013, Public Domain)



Though the DVBIC report shows 280,734 total U.S. military members are known to suffer TBI, the RAND (2008) study estimated 320,000 individuals experienced a probable TBI during deployment. “Of those reporting a probable TBI, 57 percent had not been evaluated by a physician for brain injury” (RAND, 2008, p. xxi). The RAND report also explained that “the term TBI itself refers simply to the injury to the brain, whether or not it is associated with lasting functional impairment. The exact nature of the symptoms depends upon the type and severity of the injury.” In the following passage Castner (2012) explains how his memory has been affected by his TBI.

Blast waves tear up memories and functions. They leave holes where your identity used to be. You lose parts of your past and have trouble retaining the present or remaking a future. The strong, capable soldier now can't sleep, can't discern or differentiate among voices and noises, becomes easily distracted, gets tired, cries randomly in public, and doesn't know what to order for dinner. Where does Crazy stop and TBI begin? Who Knows? (p. 154)

Savage and Wolcott (1994), co-authors of *Educational Dimensions of Acquired Brain Injury*, list memory problems and concentration difficulty as primary symptoms of Mild TBI followed by anxiety and depression as secondary symptoms. In *Hidden Battles on Unseen Fronts*, Petska and MacLennan (2009) explain, “cognitive impairments—meaning problems in thinking skills such as memory, perception, problem-solving, conceptualization or attentional deficits—present more significant barriers to community participation than do physical impairments after a brain injury” (p. 58). They believe the combination of mild TBI and PTSD is the signature injury for returning OEF/OIF service members (Petska & MacLennan, 2009). “Everyone knows that war can wreck a body, but repeatedly forget that it can wreck the souls as well” (Shay, 2002, p. 33).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Shay (2003) describes how symptoms of PTSD are portrayed by combat veterans. However, “More than simply inflicting the set of symptoms ... prolonged combat can wreck the personality” (p. 169). Combat trauma veterans suffer one or more losses of mental functioning.

“The everyday experience of authority over mental processes is denied to the survivor of severe combat trauma” (p. 170). The feeling of sanity is tainted by recurring issues regarding perception and thought. During combat the soldier’s perception is attacked by the enemy’s camouflage, prolonged attacks, and other trickery. The natural response is hypervigilance. Most veterans recover trust in their perception upon return home unless major betrayals were also experienced. Some veterans are persistently spooked by illusions of movement in their peripheral vision. This may be related to chemical or anatomical changes in the brain due to prolonged exposure to danger. “Readiness to react instantly and violently when surprised, a learned skill in training and combat, often comes to haunt and impair veterans in civilian life” (Shay, 2003, p. 178).

Not all veterans will present the official diagnostic criteria for PTSD of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) provided in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)*. Some will meet only partial criteria while even those who do present enough criteria for diagnosis may go undiagnosed and untreated. PTSD ranked as one of the top three conditions of OEF and OIF warriors. West (2009) discusses PTSD in the following passage as,

a carryover of an intense, real-life experience, PTSD seems to lurk in the shadows, a part of you but not quite part of you. This is experienced as a loss of self-control that defies willpower. The intense experience of trauma “connects with a deep survival mode in the human mind that engages when we are participants in, or witness to, a scenario of real danger to life and limb. Penetrating our ‘safety zone,’ traumatic events . . . serve as a permanent reminder that feelings of personal safety from moment to moment are not guaranteed. . . . To have unusual personal reactions or ‘symptoms’ in the wake of such an experience is quite normal. (p. 72)

In a *Report on VA Facility Specific Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND) Veterans Coded with Potential PTSD – Revised* dated December 2012, the Epidemiology Program found, after conducting a query of VHA health care utilization databases, a total of 239,174 OEF/OIF/OND Veterans coded with PTSD at a VA Medical Center and 51,173 who received Vet Center service for PTSD. Though some of the Veterans had been seen at both centers, a grand total of 256,820 OEF/OIF/OND

Veterans were seen for potential PTSD at Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities following their return from Iraq or Afghanistan. It is important to note that not all veterans seek assistance in VHA facilities. Study results presented by Adler, Wright, Bliese, and Eckford (2008) in an article published in the *Journal of Traumatic Stress* titled *A2 Diagnostic criterion for Combat-Related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder* reported the primary symptoms experienced were re-experiencing, avoidance, hyperarousal, functioning/distress, or a combination of them. The most common feelings reported were sadness, shock, and anxiety (Adler et al., 2008).

The VA has developed several course slides for what they call PTSD 101. Brian P. Marx, Ph.D. is a psychologist the National Center for PTSD and VA Boston Healthcare Systems and is also a professor at the Boston University School of Medicine. Dr. Marx provided one of the PTSD 101 course presentations on “Functional Impairment and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder”. In it he explains that “PTSD exerts a powerful effect on social functioning. It can play a serious role in impairing social relationships. It can also impair occupational and academic performance, as well as performance among other domains” (Marx, 2010).

Emotional Difficulties

Mental difficulties such as PTSD and physical difficulties are enough to interfere with participation in the learning environment. Unfortunately the survivor of combat trauma is likely experiencing emotional difficulties as well. “A person ‘broken’ by combat has lost capacity for a sense of well-being, self-respect, confidence, and satisfaction...” (Shay, 2003, p. 174). Keeping their attention in the here and now is another struggle for soldiers who have learned to dissociate themselves. These soldiers also lack the ability to plan or even think about the future. “A depleted state of apathy, an inability to want anything, to will anything, often persists into life after combat...” (Shay, 2003, p. 176). Simply following rules at work or in an educational setting may prove challenging for the soldier who experienced lethal betrayal of following orders.

Betrayal of “what’s right” often leads to a loss of value in ideals, ambitions, things, and activities. Every prior conceived notion of what is moral, what is good, what is important comes into question. The soldier is stripped of his belief system learned prior to combat. Depression, hopelessness, loss of self-respect, and loss of energy for living plague the veteran. Relationships become virtually impossible. “Men learned in combat that to care passionately for the well-being of an individual person is to become vulnerable to pain and grief” (Shay, 2003, p. 44).

They allowed the gentle side of themselves to die with the special comrade. This of course results in the persistence of isolation long into civilian life.

Perhaps the worst of continued suffering is the persistence of suicidality and meaninglessness. “The ability to kill oneself is the bottom line of human freedom. Many combat veterans think daily of suicide. Knowledge that one has this freedom seems to be sustaining” (Shay, 2003, p. 179). However, the veteran might lose all sense of personal meaning and thus suffer a contaminated identity in which the person who went into combat died and what remains is evil and deserving of punishment. “Severe trauma shatters a sense of the meaningfulness of the self, the world, and of the connection between the two” (Shay, 2003, p. 180). Grossman (2009) explains how manifestations of PTSD can persist:

Manifestations of PTSD include recurrent and intrusive dreams and recollections of the experience, emotional blunting, social withdrawal, exceptional difficulty or reluctance in initiating or maintaining intimate relationships, and sleep disturbances. These symptoms can in lead to serious difficulties in readjusting to civilian life, resulting in alcoholism, divorce, and unemployment. The symptoms persist for months or years after the trauma, often emerging after a long delay. (p. 285)

Memory and Attention

Memory presents another issue for traumatized individuals. “Severe trauma destroys the capacity to think a future or a past. The trauma world knows only is” (Shay, 2003, p. 191). “Amnesia is common for traumatic events” (p. 172). Traumatic events are not remembered narratively but are instead experienced over and over by the veteran. “So long as the traumatic moment persists as a relivable nightmare, consciousness remains fixed upon it. ...The survivor lacks authority to stop it or put it away” (p. 275). Additionally, the soldier remains in a persistent mobilization for danger, the mental and physical preparation for attack. “Survival skills, such as vigilant sleep, brought back into civilian worlds of family and employment, are actually more destructive of the veteran’s well-being than the intrusive persistence of the traumatic moment” (p. 175). That vigilance causes insomnia and agitation, combat reflexes to surprises, increased adrenaline rushes, somatic symptoms such as headaches, stomachaches, neck and back pain,

tremors, rapid heartbeat, and other physical ailments (Shay, 2003). “West (2009) provides a helpful explanation in his this passage,

Because your war zone experience went on for months, with daily exposure to danger for which you were trained with fellow soldiers you lived the military culture of grinding through life-threatening experience as routine. The routine threat, however, never invited complacency, and you were forever vigilant and ready to protect against it for the survival of your fellow soldiers and to accomplish your mission. (p. 72)

Sapolsky (2004) points out “If you repeatedly turn on the stress-response, or if you cannot turn off the stress-response at the end of a stressful event, the stress-response can eventually become damaging” (p. 16). The following passage captures how persistent and insistent the stress is:

I don’t try to remember. I don’t need to. I’m surrounded by reminders; the images simply emerge in the front of my thoughts. I’m not talking about trite, superficial reminders, like fireworks at the Fourth of July. Oh, to be startled at fireworks again! That is so temporary. The same for the slamming of car doors, or spotting bags and tires on the side of the road, appearing as IEDs on Interstate 90.

It’s the small, everyday reminders that are insidious. The rumble of a diesel engine. The smell of gasoline. A large tin can of tomatoes. Traffic circles. Putting on a life jacket. Lacing up a pair of winter boots. Unrolling a sleeping bag.

I’d just as soon forget it all. Replace a dead body or two with a birthday party. But I can’t, not while I’m surrounded by the war every day.

(Castner, 2012, p. 182)

“Impaired memory for elements of the traumatic experience is a core feature of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and clinical complaints of memory impairment for non-

trauma-related stimuli are common” (Jenkins et al., 1998, p. 278). Patients with mild TBI/PTSD, seen by Doctors Petska and MacLennan (2009), “ranked memory difficulties as one of their greatest concerns, often on par with PTSD/trauma-related symptoms (including depression)” (p. 61). These patients reported having difficulty with attention. “They shared with us that they could be engaged in conversation, smiling and nodding, but mentally they were distracted to the point of not following the conversation up to several times per minute” (Petska & MacLennan, 2009, p. 62). While in combat they developed a ‘360-degree of vigilance’ which they say now impairs their ability to pay attention and focus on a conversation or particular activity because their attention is always divided. Rather than having complaints about their cognitive processing they were more concerned with their distractibility and “believed the consequence of this attentional impairment to be quite significant. Three of the patients with mild TBI/PTSD wanted to go to school but expressed concerns regarding their ability to listen to a lecture and take notes” (Petska & MacLennan, 2009, p. 62). In a simulated college experience, all three of those patients experienced learning difficulties.

Transitioning

The Army never taught me how to deal with upsetting problems except by using combat tactics and now what do I do with the feelings I'm having? (Chuck Dean, 2007)

“Regardless of gender or combat occupation specialty, today’s combatants all have one important bridge to eventually cross after their war is over...That is to come home” (Cantrell & Dean, 2007, p. XIII). Cantrell and Dean (2007) authored *Once a Warrior, Wired for Life* with a thrust “to inform and equip both the returning troops and the civilian community with awareness of the positive aspects gained through the skills, knowledge, and experiences of serving in our country’s armed forces” (p. XIV). They explain the meaning of *Wired for Life* by first understanding that “wired in one sense means hyper, restless, agitated, and indicates that a person may have a ‘wire loose’ and is not functioning properly” (p. XIV). Their effort, however, “is to highlight ways to turn negatives into positives, and ‘having things wired’ also means that something (or someone) has been put together well and is working properly... people change, and are changed, as they prepare for war” (p. XIV). They argue that some of their changes are productive; but others are not useful to civilian life. They inform returning troops that “When

undertaking the process of switching from soldier to civilian, there may be some problematic effects from your military training and combat experiences” (Cantrell & Dean, 2007, p. XV).

Military members are accustomed to transitioning. For generations they have transitioned to new homes, new jobs, and even new and different countries as they underwent what is called a Permanent Change in Station (PCS). Their wives and children also learn to adapt to new environments, new schools, and new communities. Military members are uniquely equipped with transitioning skills that facilitate these changes and each military facility has established support systems to facilitate their relocation needs. These military communities provide tremendous support for transitioning and are inarguably superior to civilian communities in this regard. Though there are services provided to military members to assist them when they begin transitioning to civilian life, those services cannot prepare them for the lack of community support they may receive when they leave the military. “Numerous psychological studies have found that the social support system—or lack thereof—upon returning from combat is a critical factor in the veteran’s psychological health... Psychiatric casualties increase greatly when the soldier feels isolated” (Grossman, 2009, p. 279).

More than two million GWOT veterans in our communities may need support. Those in particular need are those who have separated from military service, more than 1.6 million. “Student veterans frequently re-enroll or enter college following active duty, and college and university officials need to be prepared to help ease their transition” (Rumann & Hamrick, 2009, p. 29). A recent Economic News Release published by the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics (2013) provided a summary for the employment situation of veterans. This report showed the unemployment rate for veterans they call the Gulf War-era II (duty between September 2001-2012) at 9.9 percent in 2012. They also reported that 28 percent of these veterans reported having a service-connected disability in August 2012. For male veterans 18-24 years of age the unemployment was 20 percent. In 2012 the percentage of female unemployed veterans was significantly higher than their male counterparts. Table 2-11 shows the gender comparisons for male and female veterans reported for 2011 and 2012 (DOL, 2013).

Table 2-11 Unemployed Veterans

Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 18 years and over by veteran status, period of service, and sex, 2011-2012 annual averages						
[Numbers in thousands]						
Veteran status and period of service	2011			2012		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Gulf War-era II veterans						
Civilian noninstitutional population	2,387	1,982	405	2,566	2,136	431
Civilian labor force	1,937	1,656	281	2,071	1,774	297
Participation rate	81.2	83.5	69.5	80.7	83.1	68.9
Employed	1,704	1,457	246	1,866	1,606	259
Employment-population ratio	71.4	73.5	60.9	72.7	75.2	60.2
Unemployed	234	199	35	205	168	37
Unemployment rate	12.1	12.0	12.4	9.9	9.5	12.5
Not in labor force	450	327	123	496	362	134

NOTE: Veterans are men and women who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and were not on active duty at the time of the survey. Gulf War-era II veterans served on active duty anywhere in the world sometime since September 2001. Nonveterans never served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces. (DOL, 2013).

Tayler et al. (2011), with The Pew Research Center, conducted research with OEF and OIF Veterans and found that, although the vast majority of OEF and OIF veterans believe that their military service was rewarding and had favorable outcomes (such as learning how to work with others and building self-confidence), 44 percent report readjustment difficulties, 48 percent report strains on family life, 47 percent report outbursts of anger, 49 percent have posttraumatic stress, and 32 percent report an occasional loss of interest in daily activities. “Each warrior knows that he or she will be challenged in readjusting upon his or her return. Being well equipped to support them will make all the difference in how well that transition goes” (Cantrell & Dean, 2007, p. 108).

The American Psychological Association (APA) has a military section in their website that provides resources for military information relating to war. In their guide, *Resilience in a Time of War: Homecoming*, Molitor, Palomares, and Sammons (2013) point out that soldiers returning from combat are quickly hit with day-to-day stressors such as paying bills and family expectations that can be overwhelming. They explain that,

Stress and anxiety can be the result of... the quick flight from the foxhole to the front porch and no time to decompress en route. It

may take some service members and family members time to readjust — and the failure to effectively manage during this period can create a great deal of stress, anxiety, frustration and anger (Molitor et al., 2013, p. 1).

Molitor et al. (2013) point out that there are no standard or normal stages for homecoming and that the process varies from person to person. “Understanding that homecoming has its own brand of stress is a first step in the process of a long-term successful reentry for military personnel, their families and the community” (Molitor et al., 2013). “What a returning soldier needs most when leaving war is not a mental health professional but a living community to whom his experience matters” (Shay, 2003, p. 198). The combat veteran’s experience not only matters but is integral in the democratic practice of the adult learning community.

Adult Learning Community and Narrative

“Humans are biologically equipped to learn. The result of learning is persistence through time of the thing learned. Things done to survive in the danger of death and mutilation are learned very well indeed” (Shay, 2003, p. 175). However, “War destroys social order of the mind. Combat trauma destroys the capacity for social trust” (p. 33). “Betrayal of thémis in life-or-death circumstances has profoundly damaging consequences for the biological makeup of the victim...” (p. 186). Shay explains that many of the neurophysiological changes may require medication in addition to the psychological treatments. “Any blow in life will have longer-lasting and more serious consequences if there is no opportunity to communalize it” (p. 39). However, “restoration of trustworthy community to the survivor will have healthy biological effects, of comparable or greater magnitude than successful medication” (Shay, 2003, p. 186).

Combat veterans are unique students in the adult learning community who have a myriad of experiences and unhealed emotional wounds. Those experiences and lingering wounds provide not only a wealth of information that can be tremendously valuable within the learning environment but may also present complicated issues of trust and interactions within the adult learning community. Brookfield and Preskill (2005) remind educators that “listening is just as important as speaking. To be heard is to be treated with respect” (p. 25). Brookfield (1986)

points out that four features central to the idea of andragogy are also at the heart of community action:

1. Adults work best when they are in collaborative groups;
2. Success comes when adults begin to exert control over their personal and social environments...;
3. The focus of activities is determined by adults' perceptions of relevance rather than being externally imposed; and
4. Adults learn best when they engage in action, reflection, further action, and further reflection.

Participating in collaborative groups can be a challenge for the combat veteran who has recoiled into isolation, described by Shay (2002). However, "participatory classes respect and rescue the curiosity of students" (Shor, 1992, p. 18). Brookfield (1990) points out that the most crucial factor for surviving education is a supportive learning community. "This community functions as a support network of learners who reassure each other" (Brookfield, 1990, p. 55). "Underlying all significant learning is the element of trust... The more profound and meaningful the learning is to students, the more they need to be able to trust their teachers" (Brookfield, 1990, p. 163).

Unhealed combat trauma disables the basic social and cognitive capacities required for democratic participation:

- Being able to show up at an appointed time and place, possibly in a crowd of strangers.
- Being able to experience words as trustworthy.
- Seeing the possibility of persuasion, negotiation, compromise, concession.
- Seeing the possibility of winning without killing, of losing without dying.
- Seeing the future as real and meaningful.

(Shay, 2002, p. 177)

Shay (2003) points out that “democracy embodies safe struggle over the shape and implementation of a future. An unhealed combat veteran cannot think in terms of a future...” (p. 180). Before a person can participate in a social process he or she must feel that it is safe. “Veterans with unhealed combat traumas feel that it is not safe... The persistent survival skill of unpredictability devastates the simplest forms of democratic participation” (p. 181). To fully engage in the democratic process of debate, persuasion, and compromise there must be the presupposition that words are trustworthy. “The moral dimension of severe trauma, the betrayal of ‘what’s right,’ obliterates the capacity for trust” (Shay, 2003, p. 180). Participation in any learning environment requires trust. Prior to betrayal and the knowledge of evil this trust came easy with innocence. The loss of innocence experienced by survivors of severe trauma causes irreversible change and trust becomes an overwhelming accomplishment.

Trauma survivors grant trust only as an act of courage, after time and tests of trust, one after another, like trials and labors in ancient myth. Blind trust in authority, position, and credentials is a dangerous luxury of the still innocent... If recovery means return to trusting innocence, recovery is not possible (Shay, 2003, p. 185).

However, Shay (2003) argues that giving narrative to the traumas experienced in combat provides a conduit for healing. “Major recovery requires that personal narrative be particular, not general. In a fully realized personal narrative the survivor grips the herald’s staff and speaks as himself” (p. 192). These narratives inform the community in a way that allows them to listen and respond to it emotionally. “Something quite profound takes place when the trauma survivor sees enlightenment take hold. The narrator now speaks as his or her free self, not as the captive of the perpetrator. The aloneness is broken in a manner that obliterates neither the narrator nor the listener in a reenactment” (p. 191).

Shay (2003) believes that trauma victims who have not been given the opportunity to talk about the traumatic event will have more serious and long-lasting consequences. The ability “to express to other people emotions about the event and those involved in it, or to experience the presence of socially connected others who will not let one go through it alone” (p. 198) can mitigate those consequences. He further explains how, through the use of narrative, the combat veterans can tell their stories and create them as memories versus involuntarily reliving and

reenacting them. This is a critical step toward regaining authority over memory to begin the process of putting together the puzzle of what happened. Shay (2003) explains:

Severe trauma explodes the cohesion of consciousness. When a survivor creates fully realized narrative that brings together the shattered knowledge of what happened, the emotions that were aroused by the meanings of the events, and the bodily sensations that the physical events created, the survivor pieces back together the fragmentation of consciousness that trauma has caused.

Narrative heals personality changes and enables the survivor to rebuild the ruins of character (p. 188).

Through narrative the involuntary re-experiencing of traumatic events becomes memory of the events which gives the combat veteran authority over memory. “Forgetting combat trauma is not a legitimate goal of treatment. Veterans find it morally degrading to forget the dead. The task is to remember – rather than relive and reenact – and to grieve” (Shay, 2003, p. 192). “Narrative heals personality changes only if the survivor finds or creates a trustworthy community of listeners for it” (p. 188). The veterans who choose to enter the adult education environment may find multiple opportunities to create their healing narratives. Classroom assignments often provide a conduit for sharing stories and life experiences. These opportunities may help combat veterans bring narrative to their traumas. “The essential injuries in combat PTSD are moral and social, and so the central treatment must be moral and social. The best treatment restores control to the survivor and actively encourages communalization of the trauma” (p. 187). This type of communalization is evident in the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth where officers convene from all around the world to attend a master level military art and science education program.

Teaching and Learning in CGSC

The Command and General Staff College (CGSC) officially received its name in 1947 after many educational evolutions dating back to the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry established in 1881 (Partin, 1983). In 1974 Congress approved the granting of a Master of Military Art and Science degree allowing the North Central Association to grant accreditation to the graduate program (Partin, 1983). Though the school began in 1881 in a renovated

warehouse, today its main campus location is in the Lewis and Clark building, a 410,000 square foot state-of-the-art instructional facility built in 2007 (CGSC, 2013). Each classroom in CGSC has state of the art equipment including large flat-screen high-definition television sets and computers built into each desk. Each room is able to conduct video conferencing and tune into broadcast news and media. The rooms seat up to 16 students and two facilitators (CGSC, 2013).

Each year two groups of officers attend the Command and General Staff School (CGSS) located on the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) main campus on Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for their Command and General Staff Officers' Course (CGSOC). The academic year for CGSOC students lasts 44 weeks (CGSC, 2013). While attending CGSOC many students seek a master's degree by enrolling in the Graduate Degree Program (GDP). The GDP master degree combines the CGSOC college credit courses with additional requirements for learning and conducting master's level research and writing. Upon graduation they are awarded a Master's of Military Arts and Science (CGSC, 2013).

“CGSC depends on the free flow of ideas for its intellectual vitality. Indeed, the principles of adult education practiced by the College are based on the importance of free thought in an academic environment” (CGSC, 2013, p. 23). The Command and General Staff College teaches officers through a dynamic incorporation of several learning theories and teaching modules. The faculty recognize that CGSC students are not only adult learners as described through various adult learning models; but, they are also unique adults in that the military has acculturated them to be very driven and disciplined men and women (CGSC, 2013). The average age range is 34-43 thus creating a mature adult learning environment as well. Because this group of learners is unique, the faculty is able to implement a dynamic and interactive learning environment that engages students in discussion, cognitive dissonance, and practical exercises that allow them to role model various scenarios. CGSC “employs the most appropriate techniques and methods... This includes methodologies that are learning-centered, experiential, and effective” (CGSC, 2013, p. 5). Two primary philosophies practiced in teaching and curriculum development at CGSC are the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) and the Socratic Method (TRADOC, 2013).

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)

The CGSC Faculty Development Program (FDP) provides a structured system for ensuring all faculty members, instructors, and curriculum writers are familiar with adult learning

theories (TRADOC, 2013). The FDP has created a hybrid of the ELT that incorporates Bloom's Taxonomy and outcome based learning for curriculum development. The ELT plays a major role in CGSC curriculum development with an emphasis on the Concrete Experience (TRADOC, 2013). A. Y. Kolb and D. A. Kolb (2009) explain the ELT:

ELT defines learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience” (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). The ELT model portrays two dialectically related modes of grasping experience—Concrete Experience (CE) and Abstract Conceptualization (AC) —and two dialectically related modes of transforming experience—Reflective Observation (RO) and Active Experimentation (AE). Experiential learning is a process of constructing knowledge that involves a creative tension among the four learning modes. This process is portrayed as an idealized learning cycle or spiral where the learner “touches all the bases”—experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting—in a recursive process that is responsive to the learning situation and what is being learned. Immediate or concrete experiences are the basis for observations and reflections (p. 298).

According to the ELT,

A growth producing experience in the philosophy of experiential learning refers not just to a direct experience related to a subject matter under study but to the total experiential life space of the learner. This includes the physical and social environment and the quality of relationships (Kolb, A. Y. & Kolb, D. A., 2005, p. 207).

CGSC utilizes this learning cycle to engage students in the learning process at an emotional level. Each lesson plan is written with a concrete experience designed to increase student engagement with the lesson. “A good concrete experience sets the stage for the students’ learning by engaging them on an affective or emotional level. It provides the setting through which the student connects to a past, present, or anticipated future experience” (Bogdan &

Persyn, 2010). Bogdan and Persyn (2010) explain that a concrete experience could be a brief video clip, a picture, a practical exercise, a story, or a role play scenario.

“Brain research reveals that emotion is fundamental to learning and instruction that neglects emotional dimensions of learning is likely to be ineffective” (Hinton et al., 2008, p. 100). Hinton, Miyamota, and Della-Chiesa (2008) discuss emotions as one of the core concepts of the emerging field of educational neuroscience and its implications for educational research, policy and practice. Neuroscience has confirmed that the brain develops through the interaction of biology and experience. “Emotion shapes and is shaped by cognitive processing” (Hinton et al., 2008, p. 91). Thus, they recommend providing a positive learning environment that is a secure learning environment to ensure high levels of stress do not disrupt learning.

The ELT, and its relationship with emotions, provides us with two key points that impact the education experience of veterans. First, the basis of the ELT is experience and the awareness that learners come with personal experiences that shape their learning. By incorporating those experiences into the learning process we increase their motivation and engagement in the learning process. Second, though concrete experiences are innocently planned to engage students into the lesson content, many of them can actually be triggering stimuli that sends the veteran into an abyss of memory or possibly even trigger a berserk reaction. Without understanding possible traumas and experiences of students returning from combat, faculty might find themselves in situations they aren’t prepared to handle.

The ELT drew from the works of John Dewey (1938) who in *Experience and Education* stated “the soundness of the principle that education in order to accomplish its ends both for the individual learner and for society must be based upon experience—which is always the actual life-experience of some individual” (p. 89). However, Dewey warned that education and experience are not equals and points out that some experiences are mis-educative. “Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience. An experience may be such as to engender callousness; it may produce a lack of sensitivity and of responsiveness. Then the possibilities of having richer experience in the future are restricted” (p. 25).

Dr. Kevin Shea, an associate professor in CGSC noted that “A video clip used in class may conjure up memories that are painful enough that some students will leave the classroom” (Shea & Fishback, 2012, p. 57). During Shea’s (2010) study, another CGSC faculty member

reported an event when a student had to leave the room during a showing of *Saving Private Ryan*. Shea also described a student who stated that although videos are valuable for some learning, they have “been extremely stressful to me” (p. 58).

Stress, however, is not always harmful for learning. Sapolsky (2004) tells us, “the first point, of course, is that mild to moderate short-term stressors enhance memory” (p. 210). Memory retrieval and memory formation happen best when a stressor is occurring. Sapolsky (2004) explains that when we transition from no stress to a moderate and temporary amount of stress the brain is stimulated and memory improves. However, “as you then transition into severe stress, memory declines” (p. 213). Prolonged stress disrupts hippocampal-dependent memory in a hierarchy of effects. “First, hippocampal neurons no longer work as well. Second, neural networks get disconnected. Third, the birth of new neurons is inhibited. Fourth, hippocampal neurons become endangered. Finally... prolonged exposure to stress or glucocorticoids can actually kill hippocampal neurons” (Sapolsky, 2004, pp. 215-219).

Students who are GWOT veterans have likely endured prolonged exposure to stress and are already at risk of its damages. Providing concrete experiences that heighten their stress only further prolongs their exposure to stress or glucocorticoids. Therefore, the use of the ELT must be carried out with caution so as to balance the stress levels that enhance learning without causing levels of stress that may actually shut down the learning experience, may cause the student to leave the room, or may further prolong their stress exposure and cause further long-term damage that inhibits learning.

Socratic Method

“The CGSC classroom is an active learning environment” (CGSC, 2013, p. 5) that incorporates the Socratic Method in its teaching. “This methodology is expressed through our curriculum—one that is adaptive, responsive, integrative, experiential, and transformational” (CGSC, 2013, p. 5). Reich (2003), a Stanford Political Science professor, describes “in the Socratic method, the classroom experience is a shared dialogue between teacher and students in which both are responsible for pushing the dialogue forward through questioning” (p. 1). He provides four essential components of the Socratic Method:

1. The Socratic Method uses questions to examine the values, principles, and beliefs of students.

2. The Socratic Method focuses on moral education, on how one ought to live.
3. The Socratic Method demands a classroom environment characterized by “productive discomfort.”
4. The Socratic Method is better used to demonstrate complexity, difficulty, and uncertainty than at eliciting facts about the world. (Reich, 2003, p. 1).

The Socratic Method, as described by Reich (2003) provides a platform for the mild to moderate type of stress Sapolsky (2004) refers to as enhancing memory if the right amount of “productive discomfort” is achieved. Within the Socratic Method “Nothing is more important...than the resources that learners bring to it: their experience...” In *Discussion as a Way of Teaching*, Brookfield and Preskill (2005) point out that “discussion and democracy are inseparable because both have the same root purpose – to nurture and promote human growth” (p. 3). Brookfield and Preskill (2005) also explains the dispositions necessary for democratic discussion include “hospitality, participation, mindfulness, humility, mutuality, deliberation, appreciation, hope, and autonomy” (p. 8). Many of these are impossible for veterans with PTSD and still a struggle for other veterans (Shay, 2003; Brookfield, 1986).

CSOC Officer

Prior to the GWOT, the demographics of Command and General Staff Officers’ College (CGSOC) officers were very similar year after year. Very few students had combat experience. The learning environment could be anticipated based on prior experience with students. After the GWOT began the balance shifted from students with minimal or no combat experience, to a cliquish group of combat experienced students who had a flag patch on their arm representing their combat service and a group of those who had not been in combat and had no patch. Those with combat experience had a sense of superiority over those who did not have the experience. Those without combat experience felt the pressure to quickly go to war so they too could prove their knowledge of the battlefield. A boundary grew between the two groups that would be seen as the *Haves* and the *Have Nots*, until eventually they all had combat experience. After leaving CGSC many of the students without the combat flag patch did go to war and received the combat experience that would change their lives forever. Some of them lost their lives in that experience.

Hoge (2010) wrote *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior* to help warriors “navigate” the transition from combat. He makes it clear that “everyone who has ever deployed to a war zone is changed by his or her experiences; it would be abnormal not to be” (Hoge, 2010, p. 10).

CGSC Faculty

Many CGSC faculty members are also veterans. Many of them have combat experience in the GWOT while others experienced prior wars such as Desert Storm or Vietnam. Faculty members are also vulnerable in this changed learning environment. “One of the most important considerations for classroom teaching and learning is to try to understand who is influencing whom to what purpose” (McCafferty, 1980, p. 214). Due to the nature of the CGSC curriculum, new power dynamics arose as a result of students’ combat experience. Students questioned the credibility or relevancy of the faculty. Additionally, faculty members with prior combat PTSD are at risk of re-surfacing difficulties when exposed to students' combat experiences. In a 20-year longitudinal study of the Trajectories of PTSD, Solomon and Mukulincer (2006) found that “the chronic nature of PTSD renders trauma victims vulnerable for life, and midlife is a particularly high-risk period for either delayed onset or reactivated PTSD” (p. 665). They also explain “the exacerbating effects of aging that reawaken past traumatic wounds, as well as the implications of a stressful postwar environment such as the ongoing state of terror, raise the need to increase awareness with regard to war-induced PTSD” (Solomon & Mukulincer, 2006, p. 665).

Summary

Chapter 2 described what the Global War on Terrorism encompassed and how many men and women deployed. Their demographics were explained to provide insight into college and university enrollment and the numbers of GWOT veterans applying for education benefits for college, university, or other adult education attendance. A greater understanding of war veterans was explored and their trials of homecoming, including their participation in adult learning environments. The effects of combat experience, trauma, and stress were discussed including how they correlate with particular combat experiences and number of deployments. Issues pertaining to GWOT veteran students transitioning into the adult learning community were explored. Finally, the teaching and learning as experienced in the Command and General Staff College was explored to set the stage for this research.

Chapter 3 describes the survey methodology and rationale for using a survey design to collect information for this study. Greater detail is provided about the selected population, instrumentation, data collection and analysis, and protections for human subjects such as confidentiality and voluntary participation.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to learn from military veteran students how their combat experience affects them in adult education and learning activities. The survey methodology and rationale for using a survey design for collecting information are described in this chapter. Greater detail is provided about the selected population, instrumentation, data collection and analysis, and protections for human subjects such as confidentiality and voluntary participation.

The primary research question was, “In what ways does Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) combat experience affect combat veteran students while participating in an adult learning environment?” To answer this question the research solicited data from combat veteran students based on the following secondary questions:

1. What specific combat experiences do combat veteran students have?
2. What effects do combat veteran students report having?
 - a. Classroom Effects
 - b. Assignments, Reading, and Memory
 - c. Overall Effects
3. What types of coping activities are practiced by combat veteran students?
4. How much time is required to return to normal functioning when a triggering event is experienced?
5. Are there differences between services?
 - a. Differences between Service branches (Army, Air Force, Marines, Navy, and Coast Guard).
 - b. Differences between Service Components (Active and Reserve).
6. Are there differences between combat deployments?
 - a. Differences between Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.
 - b. Differences between officers with one, two, and three or more deployments into combat.
 - c. Differences between officers with less than one year of combat experience, one to three years of combat experience, more than three but less than five years of combat experience, and more than five years of combat experience since 2001.

7. Are there differences between genders?
8. What personal recommendations do combat veterans have for educators?

Research Design

This research used a survey research model as described by Rea and Parker (2005) in *Designing & Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide*. “As a research technique in social sciences and professional disciplines, survey research has derived considerable credibility from its widespread acceptance and use in academic institutions” (Rea & Parker, 2005, p. 3). Among the survey advantages described by Rea and Parker (2005) are: 1) the ability to solicit self-reported information from people about themselves; 2) the ability to generalize about an entire population based on data from a small portion of that population; and 3) can be implemented in a timely fashion; and can generate standardized data that are extremely amenable to quantification and consequent computerization and statistical analysis. Though there are alternatives, “there is no better method of research than the sample survey process for determining, with a known level of accuracy, detailed and personal information about large populations” (Rea & Parker, 2005, p. 5).

Self-administered Online Survey

A self-administered online survey technique using a web-based design was chosen to collect the needed information for this research. “This technique represents a convenient and efficient way of reaching potential respondents” (Rea & Parker, 2005, p. 11). Web-based surveys provide additional advantages beyond being convenient and efficient. By sending this survey through e-mail the invitees were able to determine how and where they participate. The provided link could be accessed in a variety of ways including using a computer in class, a personal laptop, computer in their home, or a cell phone. This flexibility increased not only the opportunity to participate but also privacy while participating.

The confidentiality insured by this method may have led to more candid information and information the participant might not have otherwise felt comfortable providing. “Self-administered procedures are thought to be best because the respondent does not have to admit directly to an interviewer a socially undesirable or negatively valued characteristic or behavior” (Fowler, 2002, p. 63). Information that is sensitive “is more frequently, and almost certainly

more accurately, reported in self-administered modes than when interviewers ask the questions” (p. 64).

Survey Instrument

The survey “Combat Experience in the Classroom (2013)” had seven focus areas: 1) Demographics and Combat Deployments – Service Branch and Component, Number of GWOT Deployments and locations, total duration of combat experience, and Gender; 2) Combat Experience Types; 3) Classroom Effects – How combat experience affects classroom participation; 4) Effects on Assignments, Reading, and Memory; 5) The amount of time needed to return to normal after experiencing a triggering event and what the student can do to help this; 6) Overall Effects resulting from combat experiences; and 7) Informing Educators – an open-ended opportunity for participants to provide personal recommendations for educators to be aware of and consider when they have students with combat experiences.

The survey incorporated qualitative open-ended comment boxes to give participants opportunities to provide additional information where needed. Four open-ended opportunities were provided: 1) If a significant combat experience you had is not listed, please use this space to list your experiences; 2) If there are other effects not mentioned, please share them; 3) When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what can you do that helps?; and, 4) Write what you believe educators should be aware of and consider.

Quantitative

The survey included questions previously used in research conducted by Hoge et al. (2004) and RAND (2008). Questions were also selected from the PTSD Checklist – Military Version (PCL-M), the Mississippi Scale for Combat Related PTSD (M-PTSD), Combat Exposure Scale (CES), and the Deployment Risk and Resilience inventory (DRRI) based on their relevance to this research. The overarching independent variable is combat experience/s of combat veteran students who served in the GWOT campaigns (OEF, OIF, and OND). Also considered were their GWOT Deployments quantity, location and total time deployed into combat during those campaigns. Demographic questions include Service branch (Army, Air Force, Marine, Navy, or Coast Guard) and Service Component (Active or Reserve), and Gender. Dependent variables included prior reported effects of combat experiences reported by Hoge (2010) and RAND (2008) among others.

Qualitative

The survey incorporated open-ended comment boxes to give participants opportunities to provide additional information to better help understand their personal experiences. Four open-ended opportunities were provided.

Q1: If a significant combat experience you had is not listed please use this space to list your experiences.

Q2: If there are other effects not mentioned please share them.

Q3: When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what can you do that helps?

Q4: Write what you believe educators should be aware of and consider.

Demographics

The Inquisite Survey Builder allowed for building survey questions in a variety of ways. Descriptive options were provided for collecting demographics of participants. This allowed the data to be filtered by demographics to conduct analysis on the variables. The demographics include: 1) Branch of Service; 2) Service Component (Active or Reserve); and 3) Gender. Combat deployments location, quantity, and total duration were also collected.

Services, Deployments, and Duration of Combat Exposure

The RAND (2008) study found rates of PTSD and major depression in Active and Reserve components in all Service branches, though the Army and Marines were higher. The study found higher rates of PTSD in the Army and Marine Corps and for the Reserve and National Guard components. The same were found for major depression and TBI. Thus, for this study, it was anticipated that officers who experienced a higher number of deployments or longer durations of combat would report more lingering effects from the combat and would experience more difficulties in participating in educational activities. “As with PTSD, individuals with more-lengthy deployments and more-extensive exposure to combat trauma are at greater risk of meeting screening criteria for current major depression. Of particular note, the degree of exposure to combat trauma was the single-best predictor of both PTSD and major depression” (RAND, 2008, p. 98). “When examined by location, depression scores for those supporting OIF did not differ from those supporting OEF. However, OIF soldiers reported higher posttraumatic

stress scores than OEF soldiers and OIF soldiers were more likely to seek counseling than OEF soldiers” (Lapierre, Schwegler, & LaBauve, 2007, p. 937).

Gender

The RAND (2008) study found that women were more likely to meet screening criteria for PTSD and major depression. Those who had more-lengthy deployments and more-extensive exposure to combat trauma were found to be at greatest risk. Comparisons were done for deployment campaigns (Iraq, Afghanistan) as well. The Veteran’s Administration (VA) provides a website that contains training modules for “Conducting Research with Women Veterans”. The authors provide important considerations for conducting research with women Veterans. In their discussion on gender and sex differences they point out that

Women Veterans may differ from their male counterparts and female non-Veterans with respect to demographics, biological factors, and mental health, and these differences may have implications for conducting research with this population. Taking sex or gender differences into account when doing research is essential (Wiltsey-Stirman, Scioli, & Vogt, 2011).

Street, Vogt, and Dutra (2009) conducted an extensive literature review of gender differences in their study published in the *Clinical Psychology Review* and found:

Although some studies provide evidence that combat experiences may have a slightly stronger negative impact on women than men, a number of others studies do not support this conclusion. Thus, definitive conclusions regarding gender differences in combat experiences and their consequences for postdeployment health must await additional empirical inquiry (p. 688).

This study included analyses of differences based on gender. Lapierre et al. (2007) found a strong association between women and higher depression scores. “Female participants were more likely to report depressive symptoms than male participants for OIF veterans, and the effect approached statistical significance for OEF veterans... However, gender was not a predictor for posttraumatic stress symptoms” (Lapierre et al., 2007, p. 941).

Combat Experience Types

The RAND study sought to “address several gaps in the existing literature concerning the prevalence and correlates of mental health conditions and traumatic brain injury (TBI) stemming from service in OEF/OIF” (RAND 2008, p. 87). They used a list of traumatic combat experiences adapted from a study conducted by Hoge et al. (2003) and reported in an article, *Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, Mental Health Problems, and Barriers to Care* appearing in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 2004. Using the combat traumas presented in by RAND (2008), this study asked if the students experienced those traumas. The RAND study showed strong correlations between combat trauma experiences and TBI, major depression, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The RAND team noted that having PTSD, depression, or TBI is likely to affect obtaining future educational goals. “Specifically, there is compelling evidence indicating that these conditions will affect service members’ return to employment, their productivity at work, and their future job prospects, as indicated by impeded educational attainment” (RAND, 2008, p. 140). Collecting combat experiences in this study provided data to determine what combat experiences types were reported by combat veterans’ who also report educational difficulties.

Most of the questions for this study relating to specific combat experiences were derived from the results reported by Hoge (2010) and the RAND (2008) report. Both of these studies found direct correlations between combat experiences and the lingering effects of PTSD, Depression, and Traumatic Brain Injury. Individuals having these combat experiences and even those who vicariously experienced them have lingering impacts on their functioning that could have direct effects on combat veterans participating in classroom activities and assignments (RAND, 2008, p. 92).

How Combat Experience Affects Classroom Participation, Assignments, and Memory

Memory, concentration, ability to complete reading and/or other assignments, distractions, discussion, trust, triggers in the classroom were some examples of anticipated responses. Physical effects resulting from triggers (hands shake, stomach tight, neck tense, mouth cottony, re-experiencing, visions, memories) were anticipated (Hoge, 2010; RAND, 2008; McEwen & Lasley, 2003; Whealin et al., 2008; Damasio, 1999; Slone & Friedman, 2008; van

Der Kolk et al., 2006; Sapolsky, 2004; Savage & Wolcott, 1994; Castner, 2012; Shay, 2002 & 2003; and Driscoll & Straus, 2009).

Though many combat experienced students may not have PTSD, “many of the signs of PTSD can be construed for what military stress teams now call Combat Operational Stress (COS). It has been determined that every participant in a war zone will manifest some aspects of COS (i.e. hyper-alertness, anxiety, frustration, anger, confusion, intolerance of ‘stupid’ behavior, sleep disruption, etc.)” (Cantrell & Dean, 2007, p. 8). A combat veteran who participated in a 2009 study conducted by Ackerman et al. (2009) was quoted as saying, “Once I got back to school, it was like I know what I need to do and it is right in front of me, but I’m just not doing it. I don’t know if it is because I am not as focused as I was before I left, or ... I don’t know” (p. 11). Another veteran of two tours in Iraq mentioned that he could no longer sit for extended periods of time and that he had to explain his need to get up and walk around the classroom to his professors (Ackerman et al., 2009).

Questions were included in this survey research to learn what effects the combat veteran students were experiencing. Questions were provided in a table with instructions to read each statement and select the answer that indicates how much you have been bothered by that problem while attending class or working on assignments. The answer choices were provided in an ordinal scale beginning with (1) Never, (2) Sometimes, (3) Often, and (4) All the time. This is a slightly different scale than that used in the PTSD Checklist – Military version (PCL-M) developed by Frank Weathers and his colleagues at the National Center for PTSD (1991) using data initially collected on Vietnam veterans which used (1) Not at all, (2) A little bit, (3) Moderately, (4) Quite a bit, and (5) Extremely. Though the internal consistency coefficients and test-retest reliability for that survey were exceptional, the scale comprised two or more different types of measure; a measure of quantity (a little bit or quite a bit), a measure of how often implied by the ‘not at all’ choice, while moderately and extremely imply intensity. This study sought to learn how often effects were experienced. The PCL-M is also highly correlated with the Mississippi Scale for Combat Related PTSD (M-PTSD). These are two of the scales used by Hoge et al. (2004) and RAND (2008). The survey used in this study contained questions found on the Hoge et al. (2004) and RAND (2008) research questionnaires.

Because the purpose of this research was not to determine if participants have PTSD symptoms but instead sought to determine classroom experiences as a result of combat

experiences some of the questions were modified to put them into the classroom context. Select questions from the PCL-M and the M-PTSD were also modified to determine classroom specific experiences. Questions were provided in the form of statements with instructions for participants to determine how often each occurs. These questions addressed issues raised by Shay (2003) regarding trust, memory, and thémis as well as issues raised by Sapolsky (2004) and Bremner (2002) regarding the lingering physical effects of prolonged stress from combat experience.

Informing Educators

Equally important to understanding the effects combat veterans may have in class and while completing assignments, understanding how they cope with persistent memories or uncomfortable classroom experiences must be explored. Hoge (2010) provides a chapter in *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior* to help soldiers returning from war to “Deal with Stressful Situations.” He explains, “The first thing to do is own up to the things that cause you the most distress on a day-to-day basis, or that you regularly avoid because they trigger distress or strong reactions” (p. 137). He then takes them through a process of “inoculation” to develop coping skills for these stressors. Based on this information questions were included in this study to ask combat experienced students what they need to do when something causes physical or emotional difficulties and how long it takes to return to normal.

Lastly, participants were provided an open opportunity to say anything after the prompt question of “What do you want educators to know? Write what you believe educators should be aware of and consider.” Rea and Parker (2005) explain that “at the end of the questionnaire, it is often beneficial to use one or more open-ended ‘venting’ questions—ones in which the respondent is asked to add any information, comments, or opinions that pertain to the subject matter of the questionnaire but have not been addressed in it” (p. 46).

Population and Sampling

This study was conducted at the United States Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC). CGSC is a graduate level school accredited by the North Central Association (NCA) to provide college credit hours and grant master’s degrees. The population chosen for this study was a group of military officers attending the Command and General Staff Officers’ Course (CGSOC) of the Command and General Staff School (CGSS) located at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in the Command and General Staff College (CGSC). “Probability

sampling is the gold standard of sampling. In its simplest definition, probability sampling means that everybody that you are interested in, your population, has an equal chance of participating in your study” (Beins, 2009, p. 119). Probability sampling was used for the targeted population within CGSC. However, this population was selected as a nonprobability sample within the military services. “The main nonprobability approach is to use convenient samples, often of college students” (Beins, 2009, p. 119). According to Fowler (2002), nonprobability samples produce cost savings and “the resulting samples often look rather similar to probability sample data, to the extent that they can be compared” (p. 55).

This population contained primarily Army military officers who were mostly Majors (a field officer rank) but may have contained a small number of Captains and/or Lieutenant Colonels. Also included in this population were small numbers of other military service officers (Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard). The students attending the resident CGSOC have an average 34-43 years of age, have completed at least a bachelor level education, and have served in the military Services eleven to fourteen years. Each classroom is stratified to create diversity in each class. A typical class group has 16 students with one female, one minority, one or two officers from other Service (Air Force, Marine, Navy, or Coast Guard), at least one international officer and the remaining students are Army officers. Most of these have served in combat at least once with many of them having completed multiple tours. Some Army Majors arrived directly out of combat.

CGSC offers two start dates for attending CGSOC each year. The students who arrive during July of a calendar year are considered the First Start class for the graduating Academic Year (AY). Thus, students who processed in during July of 2013 were considered the AY2014-01 (First Start) class and graduated in May of 2014. The students who arrived and started classes in February of 2013 were a part of the AY2013-02 (Second Start) class and graduated in December of 2013. The AY 2014 First Start class was the larger of the two with 1082 military officers attending. The AY 2013 Second Start class had 335 military students. A pilot survey was administered to the AY2013-02 students. The data was analyzed to determine survey structural changes needed. The final survey was then administered to the 990 of the 2014-01 students (U.S. Military only). The final survey was not administered to international students or civilians.

The population within CGSOC was accessible via e-mail invitations. Consequently, no additional sampling was necessary for administering the survey. Demographics were collected for certain population groups but not all. Race, age, ethnicity, marital status, number of children, and level of education were not within the scope of this research. Gender, branch of Service, and Service Component were important population groups for the study.

Survey Administration

The CGSC Quality Assurance Office provided access and use of an online survey package that allowed the researcher to build a professional survey and administer it to a large population rapidly and securely. The Inquisite Survey Builder, a licensed software for designing surveys, was selected for developing the survey. The Inquisite software was supported through Allegiance. The Allegiance Engage platform is a system for collecting feedback for analysis. The survey was published and administered using this platform. The platform secured all data to meet human subjects' protections and Army regulatory requirements for collecting data from active duty members. It allowed the researcher to upload an e-mail roster that then automatically converted each e-mail address to a code. The survey was authenticated and the code was used during survey administration to determine which invitees had not completed the survey so that a reminder could be sent. Reports were downloaded from the survey into Microsoft Word and SPSS. The e-mail addresses or names of invitees did not appear in any report as they were automatically removed from the data leaving only a code with no way to identify any individual who provided a particular response. This provided the highest level of confidentiality.

Informed consent to participate in a survey means providing information on the survey's purpose and procedures, the potential risks and benefits of the survey, whether there is a payment for participation, how confidentiality will be handled, and whether participants can withdraw without penalty (Rea & Parker, 2005; Fink, 2009; and Fowler, 2002). The invitation and the survey's opening page provided informed consent information. A waiver of documented informed consent was approved as it would provide the only personally identifying information connecting participants with the research. Contact information was provided for questions or concerns regarding the instrument or research project. The survey was delivered to the invitees through e-mail. CGSOC students are accustomed to receiving Inquisite web-based surveys through e-mail as part of their attendance. All data is maintained for a minimum of three years in

a secure, firewalled server that is not accessible by the public or military outside the Quality Assurance Office.

Protection of Human Rights

The application to conduct research within oversight of Kansas State University (KSU) was completed and is attached as an appendix. The research was determined to be exempt from Human Subjects research review. An application to conduct research within the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), Fort Leavenworth, Kansas was also submitted and is attached as an appendix. Because the researcher is the CGSC Human Protections Administrator and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Administrator the protocol package was sent to the Army Human Research Protections Office (AHRPO) for Department of Defense IRB review and approval concurrence.

The CGSC Quality Assurance Office provided access to the Inquisite survey system used to administer the survey. The only personally identifying information used in the Inquisite survey system was the e-mail roster of students invited to participate in the survey. Inquisite automatically assigned a unique code to each e-mail address so that the collected data was not reported with the identifying e-mail addresses. This provided a layer of confidentiality for the participants. The research sought only aggregate data and did not attempt to determine participants who completed the survey nor communicate with them beyond administering the survey instrument. However, the participants were provided an e-mail address to request a copy of the final results. Two participants requested the results and were provided a copy of this dissertation. The roster remained in the Inquisite survey system and was not printed or used in any way for this research other than to send the e-mail invitation for the survey.

Data Analysis

Margin of Error and Confidence Interval

“The margin of error is the amount of error that you can tolerate. Lower margin of error requires a larger sample size. The confidence level is the amount of uncertainty you can tolerate. Higher confidence level requires a larger sample size” (Raosoft). The ultimate goal of this research was to provide information to the larger adult education field. The actual population selected for the research contained 990 officers attending CGSOC at Fort Leavenworth. Using a

response distribution of 50 percent, 277 participants were desired to have a 95 percent confidence interval with a ± 5 percent margin of error.

Reliability

“The reliability of a scale indicates how free it is from random error” (Pallant, 2007, p.6). Pallant explains that there are two frequently used indicators of a scale’s reliability. They are test-retest reliability and internal consistency. The test-retest reliability is assessed by administering the scale to the same people on two different occasions whereas internal consistency can be determined by the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute (Pallant, 2007). “One measure of reliability is how internally consistent the questions on a survey are in measuring the characteristics, attitudes, or qualities that they are supposed to measure. To test for internal consistency, calculate a statistic called coefficient alpha (or Cronbach’s alpha)” (Fink, 2009, p. 47). “When you compute Cronbach’s alpha (named after Lee Cronbach), you are actually correlating the score for each item with the total score for each individual, and comparing that to the variability present for all individual scores” (Salkind, 2007, p. 310).

“Cronbach’s coefficient alpha is the most commonly used statistic of internal consistency and is available using SPSS” (Pallant, 2007, p. 6). SPSS was used to calculate the Cronbach’s coefficient alpha in this study to determine internal consistency for reliability. “This statistic provides an indication of the average correlation among all of the items that make up the scale. Values range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater reliability” (Pallant, 2007, p. 6). A Cronbach’s coefficient alpha of .7 was desired. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha was used for the pilot survey of AY2013-02 students and again for the AY2014-01 students surveyed. “To compare groups, reliability coefficients of .50 or above are acceptable. To make decisions about individual educational or health needs, you need coefficients of .90” (Fink, 2009, p. 43). Both the pilot and the final survey in this research contained one short scale with less than 10 items, thus the mean inter-item correlation value is reported for the items. A range of .2 to .4 was desired.

Validity

“A valid survey is always a reliable one, but a reliable one is not always valid (Fink, 2009, p. 47). “The validity of a scale refers to the degree to which it measures what it is supposed to measure. Unfortunately, there is no one clear-cut indicator of a scale’s validity” (Pallant, 2007,

p. 7). A valid survey produces accurate information (Fink, 2009, p. 8). “A survey is valid if the information it provides is an accurate reflection of respondents’ knowledge, attitudes, values, and behavior” (Fink, 2009, p. 43). In *How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-Step Guide*, Fink (2009) describes four types of validity: 1) predictive validity; 2) concurrent validity; 3) content validity; and 4) construct validity. Predictive validity would rely on proving that it predicts an individual’s behavior. The instrument used in this study had never before, in its entirety, been administered. Therefore predictive validity, for this study, could not be determined. “You can validate a survey by comparing it against a known and accepted measure” (Fink, 2009, p. 43). This is concurrent validity. Concurrent validity can be determined if the findings in this study prove similar to the findings in the Hoge (2004) and Rand (2008) studies for the questions that were the same or similar. Neither Hoge (2004) nor RAND (2008) published the validity of their scales.

“Content validity is usually established by referring to theories about personality emotions, and behavior and by asking experts whether the items are representative samples of the attitudes and traits you want to survey” (Fink, 2009, p. 43). Extensive use of theories such as those presented by Shay (2002 & 2003), Hoge (2010), and Sapolsky (2004) was applied in developing the instrument for this study. “Construct validity is established experimentally by trying the survey on people whom the experts say do and do not exhibit the behavior associated with the construct” (Fink, 2009, p. 43). Additional to applying theories from professionals in the fields relating to stress, PTSD, and military culture, the survey instrument’s concept and design was reviewed by peers and professionally reviewed by another survey designer and web builder. Peers who have had combat experience were also asked to review the content of questions and interpretations. A statistician was consulted regarding the descriptive variables and how the data would be analyzed.

Quantitative

SPSS, a statistical software designed for data analysis, was used for statistical analysis. The results failed to meet the basic assumptions necessary for the use of parametric statistics. Thus, nonparametric tests were analyzed to determine the sample diversity and groups among the collected demographics: Branch of Service (Army, Air Force, Marine, and Navy); Service Component (Active or Reserve); and Gender. The Kruskal-Wallis Test and when appropriate the Mann-Whitney U Test were chosen analyzed. Kruskal-Wallis tests were analyzed to determine

differences between groups based on Service branch, Service component, total years deployed to a combat environment since 2001, number of deployments, combat locations, and gender.

Qualitative

Qualitative responses were read to get an overall perspective of the responses. Responses were then be divided into salient categories and further analyzed to determine trends. Some qualitative statements were presented to give further emphasis on findings.

Pilot Survey

A pilot survey was conducted to test the survey instrument. Invitations were sent out inviting 330 CGSOC military students attending the 2013 academic year second start class which began in February of 2012 and ended in December of 2013. Twenty eight of the invitations received a failure notice that the e-mail was unable to reach the invitee. Of the remaining 302 officers who received the invitation, 57 completed the survey, giving an overall participation rate of 19 percent. This gave a 90 percent confidence level with a margin of error of ± 10 percent using the Raosoft sample size calculator found at www.raosoft.com/sample_size.html. The pilot survey had an overall Cronbach's Alpha reliability of .877 and each internal scale had a Cronbach's Alpha reliability ranging between .852 and .943. One survey section measuring recovery time had less than 10 items. Because this scale contained less than 10 items the mean inter-item correlation value is reported for the items. The summary item statistics revealed a mean of .049 with a minimum and maximum of .049 and a range of .000.

The survey had seven focus areas. The first survey focus was demographics. Inspection of the 57 participants' profiles revealed three officers who responded to the survey though they had no deployments to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) campaigns. Additionally, the international officers presented uncontrollable variables in that it could not be determined if difficulties in assignments and reading difficulties could be attributed to combat experiences or to language and cultural differences. Removing the cases with no GWOT experiences and removing the international officers increased the Cronbach's Alpha reliability to .881 for the overall instrument and between .783 and .944 for each internal scale. Using Army-only cases increased the Cronbach's Alpha reliability to .883 for the overall instrument and each internal scale between .842 and .944. Due to the uncontrollable language and cultural variables of international officers, the final survey was administered only to United States military officers.

Though the pilot showed increased reliability for Army officers, the final survey maintained all United States military branches.

The majority of the 57 participants (89 percent) had at least one combat deployment in the Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), 62 percent had at least one combat deployment in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), 26 percent had only one combat deployment in Operation New Dawn (OND), and 42 percent reported having at least one deployment to another dangerous duty assignment.

The Kruskal-Wallis found significant differences between males and females in four of the sixteen combat experience types, none of the classroom effects, none of the assignments, reading, and memory, and none of the overall effects. There were insufficient cases in the pilot to determine differences between Service branches, Service Components, and duration of combat experiences. These demographics were maintained in the final survey. Pilot Survey Cronbach's Alpha and Kruskal-Wallis Tables can be found in Appendices A and B.

The second survey focus was on the types of combat experiences participants had. Sixteen types were provided. Some overall combat experiences were lower than anticipated for participants. Only two officers had engaged in hand-to-hand combat, eight were wounded, and one was sexually assaulted. However, among the 57 participants, thirty eight (67 percent) had a friend who became a casualty. Though this number is high, it is not clear if the participant was present at the time of the friend becoming a casualty. Thus, the final survey was changed to reflect having witnessed a friend become a casualty. Thirty two (57 percent) participants saw others get severely injured or killed and thirty (53 percent) smelled decomposing bodies though females were less likely to smell decomposing bodies. Thirty four (78 percent) participants had experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt. However, two officers provided comments that they did not know where to include their experiences with improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Thus, a specific scale item was included in the final survey for IED experience. Thirty seven (65 percent) participants saw dead bodies or human remains, though females were less likely to have this experience. Three out four participants (75 percent) had conducted combat patrols or other dangerous duty activities. Nearly half (44 percent) reported that there were times during their combat deployment when they felt powerless, and 28 percent thought they would never survive.

The third and fourth survey focus areas were classroom effects and the effects on assignments, reading, and memory. The number of categories offered for responding to classroom effects, assignments, readings, and memory created a wide spread of responses. One scale used not at all, a little bit, moderately, quite a bit, and extremely, and two scales used never, rarely, sometimes, often, and all the time. One participant commented that the choices of rarely and sometimes were too close and made it difficult to decide. The final survey used never, sometimes, often, and all the time for all three scales. Within the pilot, sixteen of the 57 participants (28 percent) were easily startled during class with most only a little bit and two quite a bit. Seventeen (29 percent) feel distant or cut off from classmates. Thirty percent reported having disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class, and 36 percent have experienced anger toward classroom discussions.

Thirty seven percent of the 57 participants have had some difficulty starting assignments and 29 percent have felt anxiety when working on assignments. Thirty eight percent have had trouble concentrating on assignments, 40 percent have allowed distractions to interfere with completing assignments, and 30 percent marked true for the statement “though I know what to do, I can’t seem to do it. Twenty two percent felt that their combat experiences have changed how well they accomplish assignments. The reading and memory scale found that 58 percent of the 57 participants have had to read information more than once to remember what was read, 45 percent have had difficulty remembering what was taught in class, 30 percent have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment, and 27 percent have had difficulty remembering when assignments are due. One individual described his or her memory as follows:

Combat experience has had no effect on my memory except of those events. I have compartmentalized some particularly violent events early in my career which changed my perception of those events from what others around me recall, i.e. not remembering human limbs hanging from wires when people were blown apart. Stuff like that I have no recollection of even though everyone around me at that event clearly does. This only applies to such events early in my career.

The fifth survey focus area sought to learn how much time is required to return to normal after experiencing a triggering event and what coping skills they use. When something happens

that causes the participants to have physical or emotional difficulties, they report the maximum time needed to return to normal ranges from a few minutes to more than a day. Sixty four percent of the 55 officers who responded to this question need only a few minutes, 22 percent need up to an hour, 11 percent need a few hours, and 4 percent need more than a day. “Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again” was marked as a true statement for 23 percent of participants. When asked what helps to cope when something happens that causes physical or emotional difficulties, most simply need to take a break or engage in another activity. Four officers use rational thinking, and two talk with their friends.

The sixth survey focus area sought to learn overarching changes for individuals as a result of their combat experiences. Overall 56 percent of the 57 participants believe that combat has changed the way they view the world; 54 percent said true to “I am a different person than I was prior to combat.” Thirty two percent of participants believe their deployments increased their personal stress levels, 23 percent have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience, 20 percent get angry about what happened during their combat experiences, 20 percent report that there are times when it feels like they are watching life from the inside rather than fully participating in it, 14 percent can’t relax anymore, 12 percent believe their combat experience changed the way they learn, and 5 percent “have difficulty moving on with my life.”

Finally, the seventh survey focus area provided an open-ended opportunity for participants to provide personal recommendations for educators to be aware of and consider when they have students with combat experience. The comments and recommendations for educators are shown in table 3-1.

Table 3-1 Pilot Results for What Educators Should Consider

The goal of this survey research is to help educators better understand what students might be experiencing as a result of their combat experiences and what their needs are. With that in mind please write what you believe they should be aware of and consider.
Allowing officers time to reflect and grow would be a step in the right direction for managing what they have gone through.
Combat veterans typically have a different maturity level and perspective on life than their civilian classmates and educators. Educators often overlook the value student veterans can bring to discussions.
I think that periodic breaks are important.
Respect the opinions of the students and allow for them to share some related experiences within the scope of the class
To remember to be patient but do not allow us to use it as a crutch.
Do not treat me any differently, but be aware of factors or signs that may be setting me off. If the class allows, take a break so I have time to calm down. Or make the culture of the class ok to get up and leave for a break if needed, even in discussions.
Understand that everyone is different. Some Soldiers bottle it up, others express it with their fellow Soldiers, and some are in the middle. Each person handles the stress of combat in their own way. Don't try to baby them, just understand and help as necessary.
Remain objective and do not appear aggressive in nature. Work to gain the students' trust and then try to relate to them in some way.
Breaks on the hour every hour give time to 'reset' and clear mind
After 3 deployments I have developed subconscious coping techniques
I don't need anything special, allow students freedom to go to the bathroom, and we will self-regulate.
I would prefer to be treated like any other student and not be given any special consideration or time.
Being confined to a class room for so long is detrimental to learning. I feel that the amount of time spent in the classroom and the additional requirements for after-hours homework to be successful take away from the time needed to decompress and be physically active to work issues out
Don't take a student appearing to "wander off" mentally personally. We can't always control when we get a flashback or a memory.

In summary, the pilot survey proved valuable in determining needed changes to the final survey. Overall, the internal scales and the overall survey have demonstrated reliability. The use of participant feedback and recommended survey changes improved the instrument validity. Two factors were not adjusted for; the first is determining how to measure the loss of memory for traumatic events, and secondly, it was suggested to include post-traumatic growth inventory questions results into the survey so as to “stop showing only the deleterious aspects of combat and focus on positive life changing.”

Final Survey

The final survey was administered to the students attending the 2014 academic year. Invitations were e-mailed to 990 Command and General Staff Officer’s Course U.S. military students attending the 2014 academic year beginning August 2013. The initial number of participants was 267. This provided a response rate of 27 percent. Using the online sample size

calculator provided by Raosoft the 267 responses allows a confidence level of 95 percent with a margin of error of ± 5 percent. Inspection of the data, however, found eighteen cases with no responses to any of the survey questions, six cases in which the participants completed only the demographic questions and discontinued their participation, and eight cases in which the participants discontinued their participation prior to completing the survey. This resulted in 235 complete cases for data analysis providing a final response rate of 24 percent with a confidence level of 95 percent with a margin of error of ± 6 percent.

Reliability

SPSS was used to calculate the Cronbach's coefficient alpha to determine internal consistency for reliability. "This statistic provides an indication of the average correlation among all of the items that make up the scale. Values range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater reliability" (Pallant, 2007, p. 6). A Cronbach's coefficient alpha of .7 was desired. The overall survey received a .888 Cronbach's Alpha for reliability.

The first survey focus area collected demographic information. The second focus area sought to learn about the types of combat experiences participants had. Sixteen types of combat experience were provided. The Cronbach's Alpha for this internal focus area was .876 for reliability. The second focus area had fourteen items relating to classroom experiences. For each item the participants could select never, sometimes, often, or all the time. The Cronbach's Alpha for this internal focus area was .901 for reliability. The fourth focus area had fourteen items relating to completing assignments, reading materials, and memory. For each item the participants could select never, sometimes, often, or all the time. The Cronbach's Alpha for this internal scale was .927 for reliability.

The fifth survey focus area asked three items were asked regarding recovery time. The first item asked "When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?" The next two items were statements the officers marked as being true or false for them. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was .723. Because this scale contained less than 10 items the mean inter-item correlation value is reported for the items. The summary item statistics revealed a mean of .582 with a minimum and maximum of .582 and a range of .000.

The sixth focus area provided ten items relating to the overall combat experience effects. These items were provided as statements for participants to mark if the statement was true or false for them. The Cronbach's Alpha for this internal scale was .806 for reliability. The seventh focus area provided an open-ended opportunity for participants to provide personal recommendations for educators to be aware of and consider when they have students with combat experience. The Cronbach's Alpha and statistics tables can be found in Appendix C. The Kruskal-Wallis tables are in Appendix D. The open-ended results can be found in chapter 4.

Demographics

Service Branch and Component

The branches represented in the 235 participants were 212 Army, 10 Air Force, 8 Marine, and 5 Navy officers. No Coast Guard officers completed the survey. The Service Components represented included 211 Active Duty, 11 Reserve, and 13 National Guard officers.

Table 3-2 Branch of Service Frequencies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Army	212	90.2	90.2	90.2
Air Force	10	4.3	4.3	94.5
Marine	8	3.4	3.4	97.9
Navy	5	2.1	2.1	100.0
Total	235	100.0	100.0	

Table 3-3 Service Component Frequencies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Active	211	89.8	89.8	89.8
Reserve	11	4.7	4.7	94.5
National Guard	13	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	235	100.0	100.0	

Gender

The participants included 207 Males and 25 Females who completed the survey; three officers chose not to disclose their gender.

Table 3-4 Gender Frequencies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	207	88.1	89.2	89.2
Female	25	10.6	10.8	100.0
Total	232	98.7	100.0	
Missing System	3	1.3		
Total	235	100.0		

Deployment Location: OIF, OEF, or OND

Participants were also asked to select the number of deployments they had made to Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and Operation New Dawn (OND).

Table 3-5 Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) Frequencies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Zero	51	21.7	24.8	24.8
	One	94	40.0	45.6	70.4
	Two	34	14.5	16.5	86.9
	Three or More	27	11.5	13.1	100.0
	Total	206	87.7	100.0	
Missing	System	29	12.3		
Total		235	100.0		

Table 3-6 Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) Frequencies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Zero	10	4.3	4.6	4.6
	One	84	35.7	38.7	43.3
	Two	82	34.9	37.8	81.1
	Three or More	41	17.4	18.9	100.0
	Total	217	92.3	100.0	
Missing	System	18	7.7		
Total		235	100.0		

Table 3-7 Operation New Dawn (OND) Frequencies

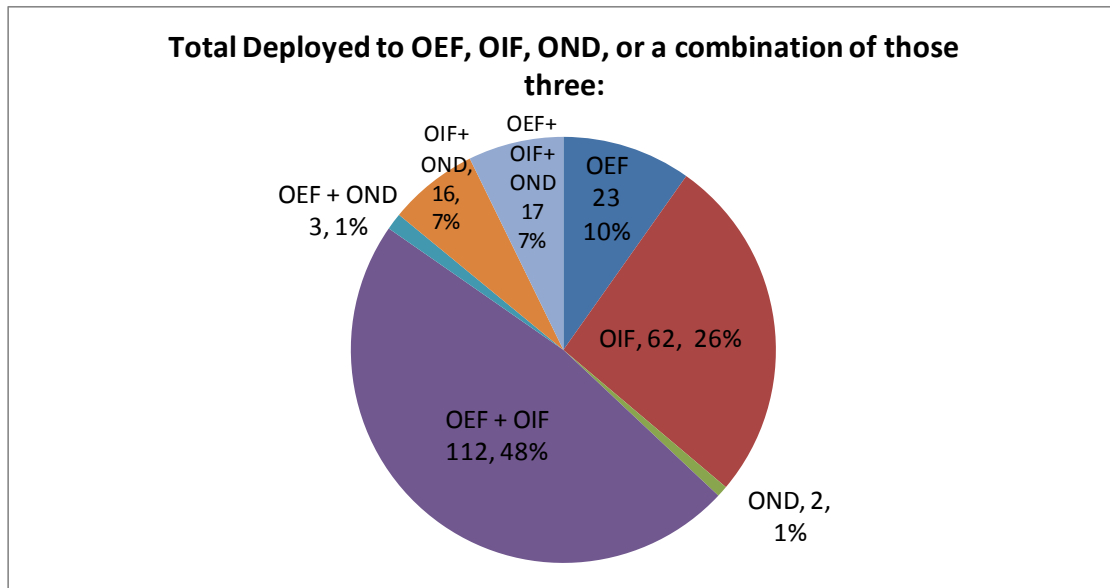
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Zero	94	40.0	71.2	71.2
	One	37	15.7	28.0	99.2
	Three or More	1	.4	.8	100.0
	Total	132	56.2	100.0	
Missing	System	103	43.8		
Total		235	100.0		

Table 3-8 OEF, OIF, and OND Deployments Count and Percent

Please select how many times you have deployed since 2001.	Zero	One	Two	Three or More
I deployed to an Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) assignment:	51	94	34	27
	25%	46%	17%	13%
I deployed to an Operation Iraqi (OIF) Freedom assignment:	10	84	82	41
	5%	39%	38%	19%
I deployed to an Operation New Dawn (OND) assignment:	94	37	0	1
	71%	28%	0%	1%

Because previous studies made comparisons between OEF and OIF, the participants had to be grouped into those who had experience in one, two, or all three campaigns to determine the overlaps. The majority (48 percent) of participants had a combination of OEF and OIF experience and 7 percent had experience in all three campaigns. Only two officers had OND experience but no OEF or OIF experience. Figure 3-1 shows those final numbers.

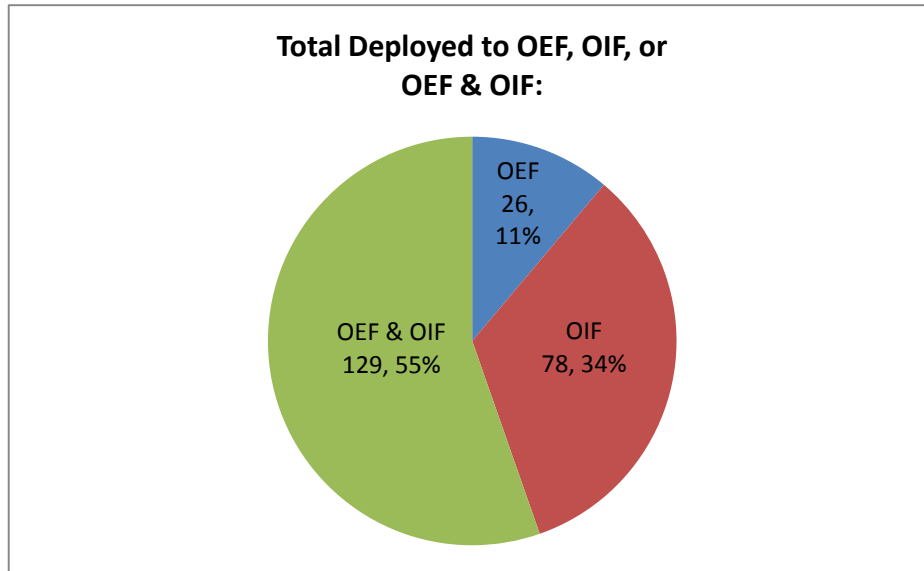
Figure 3-1 Experience in OEF, OIF, OND, or a Combination



The comparisons made in the RAND (2010) and Hoge et al. (2004) studies found significant differences between those who had OEF experience and those who had OIF experience. Thus, in order to make similar comparisons the two OND officers were removed and the remaining population was divided into three groups; those with OEF experience but no OIF, those with OIF experience but no OEF, and those who had both OEF and OIF. Figure 3-2 shows

that, of the remaining participants, 55 percent had both OEF and OIF, 34 percent had only OIF, and 11 percent had only OEF experience.

Figure 3-2 Experience in OEF, OIF, or OEF & OIF



The participants were given an opportunity to provide other combat deployments they have experienced in addition to OEF, OIF, and OND. They provided a broad range of campaigns and deployments. Not all could be disclosed as they were classified locations. The locations provided included: Africa, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Philippines, Honduras, Libya, Tripoli Brittany, France Constantia, Romania, Egypt, Kosovo, Kuwait, Bosnia, HOA, UAE, USS Ship, Southwest Asia, Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, and Operation Unified Response, Haiti. Some listed CENTCOM, SOUTHCOM, NORTHCOM, AND AFRICOM areas of responsibility rather than listing the specific location.

Overall Amount of Time in Combat Deployments

The question regarding the overall time spent deployed to a combat environment since 2001 provided four answer choices. Seven officers had less than one year, 150 officers had one to three years, 71 officers had more than three years but less than five years, and seven officers had five years or more total time deployed to a combat environment since 2001.

Table 3-9 Time Spent Deployed to a Combat Environment Frequencies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than one year	7	3.0	3.0	3.0
1-3 years total	150	63.8	63.8	66.8
More than 3 years but less than 5 years	71	30.2	30.2	97.0
5 years or more	7	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	235	100.0	100.0	

The overall amount of time these combat veterans were exposed to the combat environment and prolonged stress was determined by asking participants how much time they had spent deployed to a combat environment since the GWOT began in 2001. The participants were provided four answer choices. Seven officers had ‘less than one year’ of total time spent in combat. The majority (150 out of 235) had between one and 3 years of time spent in combat since 2001. The second largest group included 71 officers who had ‘more than three years but less than five years.’ Seven officers had ‘five years or more’ total time deployed to a combat environment since 2001. The following table shows the numbers and percentiles.

Summary

Chapter three provided the research questions, design, methodology and rationale for this research. It was a survey research that included quantitative and open-ended qualitative questions. This chapter discussed the population and setting for the survey, how the sample was selected, how the survey was administered, the rationale for an online survey, and the choice of questions included in the survey instrument. The data analysis plan was included and the protection of human rights as participants in research was described. Pilot survey results were provided with the rationale for necessary changes. The pilot survey proved reliability and validity for the overall instruments. The final survey response rate, confidence interval, and margin of error were provided. Reliability and demographic frequencies were provided. Chapter four provides the survey data results.

Chapter 4 - Survey Results

Introduction

This research examined how combat experiences affect students participating in adult learning environments. Specifically it looked at the types of combat experiences Command and General Staff Officers' School (CGSOC) students had and the effects resulting from those experiences. It explored the challenges experienced when participating in the classroom and while completing assignments and readings. It asked these students to explain the coping skills they use when they have a triggering moment and how much time was needed to return to normal after experiencing one of those moments. Finally, it explored overall effects and provided participants the opportunity to provide feedback to educators on what they should be aware of when they have combat experienced students in their classroom. A self-administered online survey technique was chosen to collect the needed information for this research. This chapter provides the survey results.

Research Questions

The primary research question was, "In what ways does Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) combat experience affect combat veteran students while participating in an adult learning environment?" To answer this question the research solicited data from combat veteran students based on the following secondary questions:

1. What specific combat experiences do combat veteran students have?
2. What effects do combat veteran students report having?
 - a. Classroom Effects
 - b. Assignments, Reading, and Memory
 - c. Overall Effects
3. What types of coping activities are practiced by combat veteran students?
4. How much time is required to return to normal functioning when a triggering event is experienced?
5. Are there differences between Services?
 - a. Differences between Service branches (Army, Air Force, Marines, Navy, and Coast Guard).

- b. Differences between Service Components (Active and Reserve).
- 6. Are there differences between combat deployments?
 - a. Differences between Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).
 - b. Differences between officers with one, two, and three or more deployments into combat.
 - c. Differences between officers with less than one year of combat experience, one to three years of combat experience, more than three but less than five years of combat experience, and more than five years of combat experience since 2001.
- 7. Are there differences between genders?
- 8. What personal recommendations do combat veterans have for educators?

Survey

The survey “Combat Experience in the Classroom (2013)” had seven focus areas: 1) Demographics and Combat Deployments – Branch of Service and Service Component, Number of GWOT Deployments and locations, total duration of combat experience, and Gender; 2) Combat Experience Types; 3) Classroom Effects – How combat experience effects classroom participation; 4) Effects on Assignments, Reading, and Memory; 5) The amount of time needed to return to normal after experiencing a triggering event and what the student can do to help this; 6) Overall Effects resulting from combat experiences; and 7) Informing Educators – an open-ended opportunity for participants to provide personal recommendations for educators to be aware of and consider when they have students with combat experiences.

The survey incorporated qualitative open-ended comment boxes to give participants opportunities to provide additional information where needed. Four open-ended opportunities were provided: 1) If a significant combat experience you had is not listed, please use this space to list your experiences; 2) If there are other effects not mentioned, please share them; 3) When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what can you do that helps?; and, 4) Write what you believe educators should be aware of and consider.

Research Question 1: What specific combat experiences do combat veteran students have?

Combat Experience Types Scale Items

Sixteen types of combat experiences were presented for the participants to determine how many times they had that particular experience. They were provided four answer choices to determine which experiences they had; either zero times, once, a few times (2-4), or several times (5+). Two hundred of the 235 officers (85 percent) who responded had experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt, 107 of those had felt it several times. Specifically experiencing an IED explosion near them was reported by 149 officers (63 percent); 65 of them had experienced IED explosions several times. One hundred forty eight officers (63 percent) had been attacked or ambushed and 78 of them had this happen several times.

The second most experienced combat type was seeing dead bodies or human remains reported by 181 officers (77 percent) with 105 of them having this experience several times. Smelling decomposing bodies was reported by 130 officers (55 percent) and 96 officers (41 percent) had to handle or uncover human remains. The third highest reported experience had 162 officers (69 percent) who saw others get severely injured or killed. Sixty six of them had this experience several times. More than half of participants (55 percent) reported they witnessed a friend become a casualty. Twenty six of them had witnessed this several times. Thirty six officers (15 percent) were personally wounded/injured in combat and 85 officers (36 percent) thought they would never survive. Twenty seven (12 percent) officers witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners, 21 (9 percent) engaged in hand-to-hand combat, and 89 (37 percent) report being responsible for a death.

Among the 235 participants, 57 officers (24 percent) felt betrayed by someone in their unit and one was sexually assaulted though it is not clear if that was by someone in their unit. That individual had a combination of fourteen of the sixteen combat experience types. No females reported sexual assault. Nearly half (48 percent) of participants (113) reported that there were times during their combat deployment when they felt powerless.

Table 4-1 Combat Experience Types

Combat Experience Types	Aggregate Count & Percent			
	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	211	8	9	4
	91%	3%	4%	2%
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	107	42	60	26
	46%	18%	26%	11%
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	72	28	68	66
	31%	12%	29%	28%
I smelled decomposing bodies.	105	25	54	51
	45%	11%	23%	22%
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	35	23	70	107
	15%	10%	30%	46%
I was wounded/injured in combat.	233	35	1	0
	100%	15%	0%	0%
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	199	7	12	8
	85%	3%	5%	3%
I thought I would never survive.	208	22	46	17
	89%	9%	20%	7%
I was responsible for a death.	149	12	37	40
	64%	5%	16%	17%
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	146	26	23	8
	62%	11%	10%	3%
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	178	18	58	105
	76%	8%	25%	45%
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	53	23	59	31
	23%	10%	25%	13%
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	122	36	30	30
	52%	15%	13%	13%
I was attacked or ambushed.	137	20	50	78
	59%	9%	21%	33%
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	85	31	53	65
	36%	13%	23%	28%
I was sexually assaulted.	86	1	0	0
	37%	0%	0%	0%

Open-Ended Question: If a significant combat experience you had is not listed please use this space to list your experiences.

Participants were provided an open-ended box to report any other events they had experienced that were significant in their combat experiences. Five officers reported being in a vehicle that was rolled over or destroyed by a tank mine or a rocket propelled grenade (RPG). One “frequently had to walk through possible APM areas.” APM is an acronym for Airborne

Particulate Matter. Two officers spoke of experiences with women or children who had been severely injured. One provided this account:

The most difficult experience for me was witnessing and caring for the children who were mangled by unexploded ordnance. I took care of one small boy who was about the age of my son who had been injured, but his friend had been killed. The boy was terrified and his friend's face and most of his left arm had been removed by the explosion.

Four officers spoke of direct fire, and two reported indirect fire. One planned and conducted kill/capture raids. One individual had experienced "a couple of suicide attempts" and another witnessed the Forward Operating Base (FOB) Marez chow hall suicide bomber of 2004. One had to assist with the aftermath of a suicide bomber and another had to "sanitize" after attacks. One had experienced two episodes (one Iraqi and one Afghani) in which the forces they were training "sold us out, ambushed us and attacked us from within our compounds."

Hoge et al. (2004, 2008, 2010) and RAND (2008) Combat Experiences

This study sought to determine if the students in the Command and General Staff Officers College had the same or similar experiences found in the Hoge et al. (2004) and RAND (2008) studies. The Rand (2008) study was conducted with Army Soldiers and Marines with both enlisted and officer ranks. The Hoge et al. (2004) study was conducted with military members representing all Services and ranks. This study collected information from field grade officers attending a higher education military program. Both RAND (2008) and Hoge et al. (2004) studies showed the Army as having higher rates of experiences and effects resulting from those experiences. This study found the same. Because Hoge (2010) reported Army only percentages and the RAND (2008) reported the percentages for all Services, this study split the data based on Services to allow comparisons. The total percentage was calculated for Army soldiers having that experience and a total percentage for the Navy, Marines, and Air Force combined. Table 4-2 shows these comparisons.

Table 4-2 Combat Experience Types Compared to RAND (2008) and Hoge (2010) Results

Combat Experience Types Percent one or more times	Army	Navy, Marines, and Air Force	RAND, 2008, p. 97	Hoge, 2010, p. 19
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	9%	4%	Rand: 9.5%	Hoge:22%
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	56%	35%	Rand: 49.6 had a friend who did... but was not specifically witnessed.	Hoge: 86% for “knowing someone” who did and 22% for “had a buddy shot or hit who was near you.”
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	72%	50%	Rand: 45%	Hoge: 22% for “had a buddy shot or hit who was near you.”
I smelled decomposing bodies.	60%	22%	Rand: 37%	
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	87%	65%	Rand: 22.9% for “being physically moved or knocked over by an explosion.”	
I was wounded/injured in combat.	16%	4%	Rand: 33.5% (10.7% required hospitalization and 22.8% did not)	Hoge: 14%
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/ prisoners.	13%	0%	Rand: 5.3%	
I was responsible for a death.	39%	30%	Rand: 5.2% for civilian death	Hoge: 48% for enemy and 14% for noncombatant
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	25%	13%	Rand: 45.2% for noncombatants	Hoge: 95%
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	80%	52%		
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	43%	30%		Hoge: 50%
I was attacked or ambushed.	68%	22%		Hoge: 89%
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	67%	35%	Rand: 22.9% for “being physically moved or knocked over by an explosion.”	

Overall, this study supported the findings of both the Hoge et al. (2004) and RAND (2008) studies but found higher levels of experiences that were more specific in nature. For example, rather than asking if they knew of someone who had become a casualty regardless of location, this study asked if they had witnessed a friend become a casualty. Witnessing a friend becoming a casualty versus knowing of someone who became a casualty increases the trauma

experience. More than half of respondents (128) reported they witnessed a friend become a casualty; twenty six reported witnessing this several times.

The Hoge et al. (2004) study asked military members if they had to handle or uncover human remains and found 50 percent had. This study found that 30-43 percent had but also asked if they saw dead bodies or human remains. Though many did not have to handle the dead bodies, 80 percent of Army officers had been exposed to them (52 percent for the other Services). Hoge (2010) reported 22 percent of participants had a buddy shot or hit who was near, whereas this study had 72 percent of participants reporting having seen others get severely injured or killed and 28 percent had seen this several times.

The RAND (2008) study had 22.9 percent of participants who reported being physically moved or knocked over by an explosion, whereas 87 percent of the Army officers in this study had experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt. This question was asked in this way to bring light to an environment that may be filled with the constant sound and reminder that danger and threat is very near regardless of its immediate impact. Though 23 percent of the RAND (2008) participants may have had a closer call than merely feeling a nearby explosion, this study demonstrated that 87 percent of the Army officers and 65 percent of the other Service officers had experienced an explosion. A specific question regarding IED explosions was added to this survey study and found that 67 percent of Army officers and 35 percent of other Service officers experienced an IED explosion.

In summary, 95 percent of all participants had at least one combat experience type. Eleven officers (5 percent) had none of the combat experiences and nine officers had only one of the sixteen combat experience types. Without including the combat traumas provided in the open-ended responses, 201 of the participants (86 percent) experienced five or more combat traumas. More than half (53 percent) of participants had a combination of up to eight combat experience types and ninety two (35 percent) had a combination of more than half of the sixteen combat experience types. Seven officers had thirteen of the combat experience types, four had fourteen, and one individual had fifteen of the sixteen combat experience types.

Research Question 2: What effects do combat veteran students report having?

Classroom Effects

More than half (56 percent) of the 235 participants responded that they felt irritable, 45 percent said classroom discussions angered them, and 36 percent felt emotionally numb. One third (33 percent) of them were uncomfortable when in class and 33 percent felt distant or cut off from classmates. One in four of them (25 percent) have had physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminded them of a stressful combat experience and 42 percent of participants have had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument). Twenty one percent were tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by their combat experiences. 30 percent were easily startled during class, 13 percent were still on alert for combat when in class, and 17 percent reported that something triggered them that made them feel as if a stressful combat experience was happening again (as if reliving it). Nearly a third (30 percent) of these officers were easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience, 28 percent had disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class, and 9 percent avoided class activities/situations because they reminded them of a stressful combat experience.

Table 4-3 Aggregate Classroom Effects

Classroom Effects	Aggregate Count & Percent			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I am easily startled during class.	165	68	2	0
	70%	29%	1%	0%
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	164	58	12	1
	70%	25%	5%	0%
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	156	63	12	3
	67%	27%	5%	1%
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	195	36	4	0
	83%	15%	2%	0%
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	202	27	3	0
	87%	12%	1%	0%
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	169	58	7	1
	72%	25%	3%	0%
Classroom discussions anger me.	127	90	14	3
	54%	38%	6%	1%
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	174	55	5	1
	74%	23%	2%	0%
I feel irritable.	103	109	18	5
	44%	46%	8%	2%
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	136	79	15	5
	58%	34%	6%	2%
I feel emotionally numb.	151	55	21	7
	65%	24%	9%	3%
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	184	33	10	8
	78%	14%	4%	3%
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	162	62	6	2
	70%	27%	3%	1%
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	212	20	1	0
	91%	9%	0%	0%

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Nearly all (83 percent) of the 235 participants had to read information more than once to remember what was read, 60 percent seemed to drift away while reading, and 23 percent believed their combat experience negatively affects their ability to remember what they read. More than half (58 percent) had difficulty remembering what was taught in class and 42 percent had difficulty remembering when assignments were due. Many of participants (39 percent) had difficulty starting assignments and 32 percent had difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment. Once the assignment had been started, 47 percent had trouble concentrating on it, 43 percent allowed distractions to interfere with completing it, 42 percent caught themselves

thinking about combat experiences while working on assignments, and 36 percent felt anxiety when working on assignments. In addition to those difficulties, 10 percent of participants believed their combat experiences affected their ability to complete assignments and 23 percent believed how well they accomplish the assignments changed because of their combat experiences. Several (29 percent) of these combat veterans marked true to “Though I know what to do, I can’t seem to do it.”

Table 4-4 Aggregate Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects

Assignments, Reading, and Memory	Aggregate Count & Percent			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	212	18	3	2
	90%	8%	1%	1%
I have difficulty starting assignments.	144	76	11	4
	61%	32%	5%	2%
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	150	73	8	4
	64%	31%	3%	2%
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	124	89	14	8
	53%	38%	6%	3%
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	93	88	40	14
	40%	37%	17%	6%
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	166	56	9	3
	71%	24%	4%	1%
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	133	75	23	4
	57%	32%	10%	2%
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	181	38	12	3
	77%	16%	5%	1%
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	135	81	11	6
	58%	35%	5%	3%
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	40	126	46	22
	17%	54%	20%	9%
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	179	39	12	3
	77%	17%	5%	1%
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	98	105	23	8
	42%	45%	10%	3%
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	159	61	11	3
	68%	26%	5%	1%
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	136	73	18	6
	58%	31%	8%	3%

Overall Effects

Seventy four percent of the 235 participants marked true for “combat has changed the way I view the world” and 72 percent marked true for “I am a different person than I was prior to

combat.” Fifty two percent of participants marked true for “my deployments increased my personal stress levels,” 32 percent marked true for “my combat experience changed the way I learn,” and 11 percent marked true for “my combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.” Experiencing flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience was reported by 32 percent of participants and 25 percent reported they get angry about what happened during combat experiences. Fifteen officers (6 percent) reported having difficulty moving on with life, 17 percent felt they can’t relax anymore, and 23 percent marked true for “there are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.”

Table 4-5 Aggregate Overall Effects

Overall	Aggregate Count & Percent	
	Total True	False
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	27	208
	11%	89%
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	39	195
	17%	83%
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	75	160
	32%	68%
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	173	62
	74%	26%
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	15	220
	6%	94%
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	76	159
	32%	68%
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	58	176
	25%	75%
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	169	65
	72%	28%
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	122	112
	52%	48%
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	53	179
	23%	77%

Open-Ended Question: If there are other effects not mentioned, please share them.

An open-ended opportunity was provided for participants to explain other combat experience effects they had but that weren’t provided in the tables. Twenty officers provided responses. Four officers had memory difficulties, such as “I am suffering from short term

memory loss and sometimes I enter class and for a moment I don't know where I am" and "personally dealing with memory issues brought on by concussions." One individual wrote, "Not sure if my memory trouble is tied to my combat experience, but my memory and ability to concentrate seems to have changed since 2004 (first deployment)." One individual mentioned how he or she coped with the memory issue, "Though I occasionally forget things, I have developed habits for documentation and review that prevent me from ultimately missing anything important," whereas another said, "My mind will block out information when I get stressed. I can't stop forgetting." Three officers mentioned concentration issues such as "Cannot concentrate during lectures or when someone is speaking directly at me."

One individual mentioned that "small sounds are annoying just as much as loud sounds" and another stated that "combat experience has me wanting to do my absolute best in all my work. Any slacking in work means I may slack or cut corners in my work which can result in a soldier dying because of my mistake." Two officers mentioned that classroom discussions "remind me what I went through" and "have made the dreams come back. I had gone for a while without dreaming about stuff, but now I wake up in the middle of the night again." One mentioned that he or she "often can't relate at all to others who have not been through what I have been through." Another wrote:

In my opinion and experience, it is not just that combat actions affect performance; it is how others relate to the way we have had to deal with getting through combat. Families, coworkers, teachers, parents, and civilians sometimes don't realize that combat makes you look at things differently and attack problems differently for the rest of your life. Relationships are forever changed with family; and your general outlook on life has changed where priorities are different. For example, threats are either life threatening or they are not, and sometimes non-life threatening threats that become persistent pests become life threatening based on our experiences in combat.

One individual explained that the combat experiences "affect me when I am alone and have time to think, or am stressed out and trying to sleep and something triggers a memory. Class keeps me focused on the work and learning and not thinking about combat." Three others

mentioned positive aspects within the class such as “my combat assignments actually have assisted in preparation for my classes,” “provides good examples that apply to the classroom,” and “provide tangible application of the concepts we discuss.” Some mentioned they weren’t sure they could attribute their memory or other issues to combat and one individual explained that his or her responses would have been different if asked sooner after the combat experience, which ended in 2008, since “I feel improvement over time.” Another individual mentioned having two years off prior to coming to class, which allowed him or her to “mostly de-stress from my experiences.”

Summary

In summary, these combat veterans reported a variety of classroom effects, including irritability, anger, discomfort, feeling emotionally numb and feeling distant or cut off from classmates. They had emotional or physical reactions to either memories of combat or simply day-to-day agitations. While participating in class some were still on alert for combat, were easily startled, and were distracted by thoughts and disturbing memories of their combat experiences. Many of them had triggers that make them feel as if a stressful combat is happening again and nearly 10 percent of them avoided class activities/situations because they reminded them of a stressful combat experience.

When it came to completing assignments and readings they had difficulty getting started, staying motivated and focused, and had difficulty remembering when assignments were due or how to complete them. It was difficult for them to concentrate as they were easily distracted and caught themselves thinking about their combat experiences. They often had to read information multiple times to remember it and had difficulty remembering what was taught in class. Many were frustrated because even when they knew what to do they couldn’t seem to do it. A couple of them describe this as having somehow acquired Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) since combat but not knowing what to do about it.

Overall, many did feel that their combat experiences not only changed them and the way they view the world but also changed the way they learn and interfered with their abilities to achieve and participate in education. They had flashbacks, get angry about what happened during combat, can’t relax anymore, and some have difficulty moving on with life. Nearly one in four

(23 percent) marked true for “there are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.”

Some of them wrote about their memory difficulties and the ability to concentrate during lectures or when someone is speaking directly at them. And some spoke about the stress their families have endured and how combat has made them treasure time and life itself. Some found comfort in the classroom because it kept them engaged in something positive because for some of them the combat experiences affected them when they were alone. Some reported that the passing of time has made it easier and has reduced some of the difficulties.

Research Question 3: What types of coping activities are practiced by combat veteran students?

The officers who participated in the survey were provided an open-ended box to respond to the question “When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what can you do that helps?” Ninety-four officers provided a response. Forty of them found that taking a break and removing themselves from the situation was important. Among those forty, nine needed to take a break or simply stop what they were doing or “disengage from the activity either physically or mentally.” Eight of those forty specifically needed to “take a walk” while twelve reported needing to remove themselves from the situation, remove from the source of stress, go outside, walk away, get away, or physically leave. Seven officers specifically mentioned the need to be alone or “isolated.”

Rational thinking was a coping technique for nineteen officers who mentioned some type of rationalizing or changing/redirecting their thoughts. Some diligently tried to change their thoughts, think positive thoughts, “reflect on my blessings,” refocus on something positive or at least something different, or spoke of thinking about their wife and kids. Others had to “remind myself where I am” or “remind myself I’m home and I’m OK.” Some reflected on the past and tried to “rationally look at the situation” or “remember the situation and that I have to go on.” Others tried to “mentally focus on the now and push down the past” or “move on from the incident and do not dwell on it” as a way of “letting go.” Another wrote, “remember that if that is the worst thing that happens to me today... it is a good day!”

Sixteen officers did some sort of physical activity or exercise. Among the physical activities listed were running, cycling, and swimming. Three simply said PT (physical training)

and eight said exercise. Fourteen officers practiced taking deep breaths or learned a breathing technique such as yoga. One individual mentioned “the grounding technique” and other techniques provided include count to 10 and back down to one, meditate, and EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) Tapping. Two enjoyed an alcohol drink and one smoked a cigar. One reported receiving medical treatment and another said “Nothing.” Seven officers talked with a friend, spouse, or someone who had a same or similar experience. Several listed a variety of distractions including: five listened to music, three read, three took a nap or sleep, and two spent time with family or played with kids. Six tried to do something else or “anything that will let my mind wander.”

One individual specifically stated he or she would “indulge in pleasurable activities (food/sex/spending money/shooting)” and another would “try to find something to make me laugh.” Four prayed and two mentioned the passing of time seemed to help. One individual wrote, “I tell myself to be a good person over and over again.”

In summary, there were many coping activities mentioned that were used while attending class and some that were useful outside of class. The primary in-class coping activity was being able to take a break when something happened that caused emotional or physical reactions. They needed to be able to step away from the situation and redirect their thinking in positive ways. Some used rational thinking to remind themselves that the situation may not warrant the reaction and some of them used counting or breathing techniques. While out of class, many of them had a physical fitness routine to help them exert energy and some chose relaxation activities such as music or playing with their children. Some benefited from either talking with someone they trust such as a spouse or friend and some specifically mention talking with someone who had same or similar experiences. These officers developed multiple coping skills that got them through yet some acknowledged it was difficult at times and some days were better than others.

Research Question 4: How much time is required to return to normal functioning when a triggering event is experienced?

Three scale items were provided. The first item asked, “When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?” The answer choices were: a few minutes, up to an hour, a few hours, and

more than a day. Of the 235 participants, 151 responded a few minutes, 41 said up to an hour, 29 said a few hours, and 6 officers have needed more than a day to return to normal.

Table 4-6 Aggregate Maximum Time to Return to Normal

When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?	Aggregate
A few minutes	151
Up to an hour	42
A few hours	29
More than a day	6

The next two items were statements the officers marked as being true or false for: 1) “The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger” and 2) “Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.” More than half (62 percent) of the 235 participants marked true for “The amount of time it takes to varies depending on the trigger.”

Table 4-7 Aggregate Recovery Time

Recovery Time Count and Percent	True	False	N/A
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	143	38	51
	62%	16%	22%

One in five (20 percent) marked true for, “Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.”

Table 4-8 Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.

Recovery Time Count and Percent	True	False	N/A
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	47	131	52
	20%	57%	23%

Though many officers may have only required taking a break and going for a walk for a few minutes, some officers needed more than a few minutes and some events took longer to recover from. At times they were able to feel normal within the hour or later in the day. However, there were some who were not able to return to normal within a short period of time and needed more than a day. As one officer pointed out, “What is normal? This is the new normal.”

Research Question 5: Are there differences between Services?

Differences between Army and Other Service Branches

The branches represented in the 235 participants were 212 Army, 10 Air Force, 8 Marine, and 5 Navy officers. No Coast Guard officers completed the survey. Due to the low numbers of Air Force, Marine, and Navy participants, information could not be generalized to represent the officers of each branch. Therefore, the branches of Service were combined into two groups; the Army and the other Services (Air Force, Marine, and Navy). The Kruskal-Wallis Test was used to determine if there were significant differences between the Army and the other Services combined.

Combat Experience Types

Differences were found between the Army and the other Services combined for combat experience types. The Kruskal-Wallis Test showed differences between the Army and other combined Services for seven of the sixteen Combat Experience Types. There were significant differences in seeing others get severely injured or killed, smelling decomposing bodies, experiencing nearby explosions that could be physically felt, seeing dead bodies or human remains, times of feeling powerless, being attacked or ambushed, and experiencing nearby IED explosions. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table 4-9 and comparisons are shown in the table 4-10.

Table 4-9 Combat Experience Types Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Branch of Service

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted
Chi-Square	.568	2.217	4.439	7.807	8.550	.218
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.451	.137	.035	.005	.003	.641

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/ injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/ prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.
Chi-Square	2.362	3.281	.964	.238	1.411
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.124	.070	.326	.625	.235

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I saw dead bodies or human remains.	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	6.352	4.647	2.077	15.723	11.809
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.012	.031	.150	.000	.001

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Seventy one percent of Army officers saw others get severely injured or killed compared to 50 percent of other Services. Nearly all Army officers (88 percent) experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt compared to 61 percent of other Service officers. Fifty nine percent of Army officers smelled decomposing bodies compared to 22 percent of other Service officers. Eighty percent of Army officers saw dead bodies or human remains compared to 52 percent of other Services and 68 percent of Army officers were attacked or ambushed compared to 22 percent of other Services. Half of all Army officers (50 percent) reported that there were times during their combat deployments when they felt powerless whereas slightly over one in four (26 percent) other Service officers reported feeling powerless.

Table 4-10 Combat Experience Types for Branch of Service

Combat Experiences Types Count & Percent	Army				Navy, Marines, and Air Force			
	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	189	8	9	3	22	0	0	1
	90%	4%	4%	1%	96%	0%	0%	4%
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	92	41	55	24	15	1	5	2
	43%	19%	26%	11%	65%	4%	22%	9%
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	61	27	61	63	11	1	7	3
	29%	13%	29%	30%	50%	5%	32%	14%
I smelled decomposing bodies.	87	25	52	48	18	0	2	3
	41%	12%	25%	23%	78%	0%	9%	13%
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	26	22	62	102	9	1	8	5
	12%	10%	29%	48%	39%	4%	35%	22%
I was sexually assaulted.	210	1	0	0	23	0	0	0
	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
I was wounded/injured in combat.	177	34	1	0	22	1	0	0
	83%	16%	0%	0%	96%	4%	0%	0%
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	185	7	12	8	23	0	0	0
	87%	3%	6%	4%	100%	0%	0%	0%
I thought I would never survive.	132	21	42	16	17	1	4	1
	63%	10%	20%	8%	74%	4%	17%	4%
I was responsible for a death.	130	11	36	35	16	1	1	5
	61%	5%	17%	17%	70%	4%	4%	22%
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	158	26	20	8	20	0	3	0
	75%	12%	9%	4%	87%	0%	13%	0%
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	42	17	53	99	11	1	5	6
	20%	8%	25%	47%	48%	4%	22%	26%
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	105	22	55	30	17	1	4	1
	50%	10%	26%	14%	74%	4%	17%	4%
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	121	31	29	29	16	5	1	1
	58%	15%	14%	14%	70%	22%	4%	4%
I was attacked or ambushed.	67	19	48	76	18	1	2	2
	32%	9%	23%	36%	78%	4%	9%	9%
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	71	27	50	64	15	4	3	1
	33%	13%	24%	30%	65%	17%	13%	4%

Classroom Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis Test showed no significant differences found for the classroom effects.

Table 4-11 Classroom Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Branch of Service

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	3.436	.216	.631	.316	.000
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.064	.642	.427	.574	.993

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb.
Chi-Square	.430	2.410	.004	3.612	.750	.637
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.512	.121	.948	.057	.386	.425

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I feel emotionally numb	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	.637	.000	.040	.614
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.425	.996	.841	.433

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

More than half (58 percent) of Army officers and 35 percent of other Service officers reported feeling irritable. Nearly half (48 percent) of Army officers and 26 percent of other Service officers agreed that classroom discussions angered them. Nearly one third of Army officers were easily startled during class (32 percent), easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience (31 percent), felt distant or cut off from classmates (34 percent), had disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class (29 percent), felt emotionally numb (36 percent) and were uncomfortable sitting in class (30 percent). Among the

other Service officers 13 percent were easily startled during class, 26 percent were easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience, 26 percent felt distant or cut off from classmates, 22 percent had disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class, 26 percent felt emotionally numb and 32 percent were uncomfortable sitting in class.

Nearly half (43 percent) of Army officers and 30 percent of other Service officers had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument). One in four officers (26 percent for Army and 26 percent for other Services) had physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminded them of a stressful combat experience. Seventeen percent (17 percent) of Army officers and 13 percent of other Service officers reported that something triggered them that made them feel as if a stressful combat experience was happening again (as if reliving it). Twenty two percent (22 percent) of all participants were tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by their combat experience and 13 percent of all participants were still on alert for combat when in class. Nine percent (9 percent) of Army officers and 14 percent of other Service officers avoided class activities/situations because they reminded them of a stressful combat experience. Table 4-12 shows the counts and percentages for each combat experience.

Table 4-12 Classroom Effects for Branch of Service

Classroom Effects Count & Percent	Army				Navy, Marines, and Air Force			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I am easily startled during class.	145	65	2	0	20	3	0	0
	68%	31%	1%	0%	87%	13%	0%	0%
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	147	53	11	1	17	5	1	0
	69%	25%	5%	0%	74%	22%	4%	0%
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	139	58	11	3	17	5	1	0
	66%	27%	5%	1%	74%	22%	4%	0%
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	175	33	4	0	20	3	0	0
	83%	16%	2%	0%	87%	13%	0%	0%
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	182	24	3	0	20	3	0	0
	87%	11%	1%	0%	87%	13%	0%	0%
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	151	54	6	1	18	4	1	0
	71%	25%	3%	0%	78%	17%	4%	0%
Classroom discussions anger me.	110	87	11	3	17	3	3	0
	52%	41%	5%	1%	74%	13%	13%	0%
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	157	50	4	1	17	5	1	0
	74%	24%	2%	0%	74%	22%	4%	0%
I feel irritable.	88	103	17	4	15	6	1	1
	42%	49%	8%	2%	65%	26%	4%	4%
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	120	75	13	4	16	4	2	1
	57%	35%	6%	2%	70%	17%	9%	4%
I feel emotionally numb.	134	52	19	6	17	3	2	1
	64%	25%	9%	3%	74%	13%	9%	4%
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	166	30	8	8	18	3	2	0
	78%	14%	4%	4%	78%	13%	9%	0%
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	147	56	5	2	15	6	1	0
	70%	27%	2%	1%	68%	27%	5%	0%
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	193	17	1	0	19	3	0	0
	91%	8%	0%	0%	86%	14%	0%	0%

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

The Kruskal-Wallis Test found significant differences for four of the 14 assignments, reading, and memory effects. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the following Test Statistics table.

Table 4-13 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Branch of Service

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	.023	5.212	1.055	6.263	5.648
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.880	.022	.304	.012	.017

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.
Chi-Square	2.901	3.320	.581	.367
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.089	.068	.446	.544

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	8.272	2.505	2.648	.007	1.594
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.004	.113	.104	.935	.207

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Though 86 percent of the 212 Army officers had to read information more than once to remember what was read, the other Services had 13 officers (57 percent) who reported this difficulty. More than half (63 percent) of Army officers seemed to drift away while reading assignments compared to 39 percent for the other Services. More than twice the percentage of Army officers reported having difficulty starting assignments (41 percent Army, 17 percent other Services) and had trouble concentrating on assignments (50 percent Army, 22 percent other Services).

Table 4-14 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects for Branch of Service

Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects Count and Percent	Army				Navy, Marines, and Air Force			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	191	17	2	2	21	1	1	0
	90%	8%	1%	1%	91%	4%	4%	0%
I have difficulty starting assignments.	125	72	11	4	19	4	0	0
	59%	34%	5%	2%	83%	17%	0%	0%
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	133	68	7	4	17	5	1	0
	63%	32%	3%	2%	74%	22%	4%	0%
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	106	85	13	8	18	4	1	0
	50%	40%	6%	4%	78%	17%	4%	0%
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	79	81	38	14	14	7	2	0
	37%	38%	18%	7%	61%	30%	9%	0%
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	146	54	8	3	20	2	1	0
	69%	26%	4%	1%	87%	9%	4%	0%
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	116	70	22	4	17	5	1	0
	55%	33%	10%	2%	74%	22%	4%	0%
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	162	34	12	3	19	4	0	0
	77%	16%	6%	1%	83%	17%	0%	0%
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	120	75	10	5	15	6	1	1
	57%	36%	5%	2%	65%	26%	4%	4%
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	30	117	42	22	10	9	4	0
	14%	55%	20%	10%	43%	39%	17%	0%
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	159	38	11	3	20	1	1	0
	75%	18%	5%	1%	91%	5%	5%	0%
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	84	99	20	8	14	6	3	0
	40%	47%	9%	4%	61%	26%	13%	0%
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	143	56	9	3	16	5	2	0
	68%	27%	4%	1%	70%	22%	9%	0%
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	119	70	16	5	17	3	2	1
	57%	33%	8%	2%	74%	13%	9%	4%

Overall Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis test found significant differences between the Army and other Services for five of the ten scale items. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics tables.

Table 4-15 Overall Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Branch of Service

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.
Chi-Square	.195	.010	6.299	11.873	.176	.023
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.659	.922	.012	.001	.675	.879

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	4.320	.023	5.088	.763	4.935
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.038	.879	.024	.382	.026

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

One third (34 percent) of Army officers experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience compared to 9 percent of other Service officers. Three out four (77 percent) Army officers believed combat changed the way they view the world compared to 43 percent of other Services and 74 percent of Army officers marked true for “I am a different person than I was prior to combat,” compared to 52 percent of other Service officers. One third (34 percent) of Army officers believed combat experience changed the way they learn, compared to 13 percent of other Service officers, and 25 percent of Army officers marked true for “there are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it,” compared to 4 percent (one person) of other Service officers.

Table 4-16 Overall Effects for Branch of Service

Overall Effects Count and Percent	Army		Navy, Marines, and Air Force	
	True	False	True	False
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	25	187	2	21
	12%	88%	9%	91%
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	35	176	4	19
	17%	83%	17%	83%
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	73	139	2	21
	34%	66%	9%	91%
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	163	49	10	13
	77%	23%	43%	57%
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	14	198	1	22
	7%	93%	4%	96%
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	73	139	3	20
	34%	66%	13%	87%
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	52	159	6	17
	25%	75%	26%	74%
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	157	54	12	11
	74%	26%	52%	48%
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	112	99	10	13
	53%	47%	43%	57%
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	52	157	1	22
	25%	75%	4%	96%

Recovery Time

One item asked, “When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?” Two items asked regarding recovery time were statements the officers marked as being true or false: “the amount of time it takes to varies depending on the trigger,” and “sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.” The Kruskal-Wallis Test found no differences in the maximum time needed to return to normal after something has caused physical or emotional difficulties. However, differences were found in the amount of recovery time needed.

Table 4-17 Kruskal-Wallis for Branch of Service

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	14.161	6.336
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.012

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Though most officers from all Services said the maximum time it took to return normal was a few minutes, 19 percent needed up to an hour, 14 percent needed a few hours, and six officers (3 percent) needed more than a day to return normal again.

Table 4-18 Maximum Time to Normal for Branch of Service

Maximum time it has taken to return to normal	Army	Navy, Marines, and Air Force
A few minutes	134	17
Up to an hour	40	1
A few hours	27	2
More than a day	6	0

Two thirds (66 percent) of Army officers responded true to the statement regarding the amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger compared to 26 percent of other Services who marked true.

Table 4-19 Recovery Time for Branch of Service

Recovery Time Count and Percent	Army	Navy, Marines, and Air Force
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	137	6
	66%	26%

Several Army officers (22 percent) marked true for “Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again” compared to 9 percent of other Services.

Table 4-20 Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again for Branch of Service

Recovery Time Count and Percent	Army	Navy, Marines, and Air Force
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	45	2
	22%	9%

In summary it appears that Army officers tended to have more experience with nearly all of the combat experience types but significantly more experience with explosions and the seeing, smelling, or handling of dead bodies or human remains. However, Army percentiles for effects were not significantly different than the other Services on most items. When an event caused emotional or physical reactions, the Army officers tended to require more time to return to normal. It is important to note that the number of respondents for the other Services was significantly lower than for the Army.

Differences between Active Components and Reserve Components.

The Service Components included 211 Active, 11 Reserve, and 13 National Guard officers. Comparisons were made between Active Components and Reserve Components (Reserve and National Guard combined).

Combat Experience Types

A significant difference was found in those who witnessed a friend become a casualty and who had to uncover human remains.

Table 4-21 Combat Service Types Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Service Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.
Chi-Square	.651	8.917	1.791	.253	.000
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.420	.003	.181	.615	.982

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was sexually assaulted.	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.
Chi-Square	.228	.169	.593	.372	.415
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.633	.681	.441	.542	.520

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was responsible for a death.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I was attacked or ambushed	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	1.451	1.238	3.945	.814	.245	.098
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.228	.266	.047	.367	.620	.754

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

More than half (58 percent) of the Active Component officers had witnessed a friend become a casualty compared to 25 percent for the Reserve Components officers combined (9 percent for Reserve and 38 percent for National Guard). The Active Components officers were also more likely to have handled or uncovered human remains (41 percent for Army compared to 31 percent for Reserve Components officers).

Table 4-22 Combat Experience Types for Active and Reserve Components

Combat Experiences Types Count and Percent	Active Components				Reserve Components			
	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	188	8	9	3	23	0	0	1
	90%	4%	4%	1%	96%	0%	0%	4%
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	89	40	56	26	18	2	4	0
	42%	19%	27%	12%	75%	8%	17%	0%
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	62	25	64	60	10	3	4	6
	29%	12%	30%	28%	43%	13%	17%	26%
I smelled decomposing bodies.	94	21	49	47	11	4	5	4
	45%	10%	23%	22%	46%	17%	21%	17%
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	33	20	61	97	2	3	9	10
	16%	9%	29%	46%	8%	13%	38%	42%
I was sexually assaulted.	209	1	0	0	24	0	0	0
	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
I was wounded/injured in combat.	178	32	1	0	21	3	0	0
	84%	15%	0%	0%	88%	13%	0%	0%
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	188	6	9	8	20	1	3	0
	89%	3%	4%	4%	83%	4%	13%	0%
I thought I would never survive.	133	18	43	16	16	4	3	1
	63%	9%	20%	8%	67%	17%	13%	4%
I was responsible for a death.	129	11	32	39	17	1	5	1
	61%	5%	15%	18%	71%	4%	21%	4%
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	161	24	18	8	17	2	5	0
	76%	11%	9%	4%	71%	8%	21%	0%
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	47	14	52	97	6	4	6	8
	22%	7%	25%	46%	25%	17%	25%	33%
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	111	23	49	28	11	0	10	3
	53%	11%	23%	13%	46%	0%	42%	13%
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	118	34	29	28	19	2	1	2
	56%	16%	14%	13%	79%	8%	4%	8%
I was attacked or ambushed.	74	19	46	70	11	1	4	8
	35%	9%	22%	33%	46%	4%	17%	33%
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	77	27	48	59	9	4	5	6
	36%	13%	23%	28%	38%	17%	21%	25%

Classroom Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis test found no significant differences for Classroom Effects when comparing Active Components to Reserve Components.

Table 4-23 Classroom Effects for Service Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	3.621	.802	3.039	.225	1.377
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.057	.370	.081	.636	.241

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.
Chi-Square	.202	.280	1.864	.016
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.653	.597	.172	.898

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	1.314	1.179	.773	1.588	.383
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.252	.278	.379	.208	.536

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Table 4-24 Classroom Effects for Service Components

Classroom Effects Count and Percent	Active Components				Reserve Components			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I am easily startled during class.	152	58	1	0	13	10	1	0
	72%	27%	0%	0%	54%	42%	4%	0%
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	145	55	10	1	19	3	2	0
	69%	26%	5%	0%	79%	13%	8%	0%
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	144	53	10	3	12	10	2	0
	69%	25%	5%	1%	50%	42%	8%	0%
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	176	31	4	0	19	5	0	0
	83%	15%	2%	0%	79%	21%	0%	0%
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	183	22	3	0	19	5	0	0
	88%	11%	1%	0%	79%	21%	0%	0%
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	151	52	7	1	18	6	0	0
	72%	25%	3%	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
Classroom discussions anger me.	113	81	13	3	14	9	1	0
	54%	39%	6%	1%	58%	38%	4%	0%
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	159	47	4	1	15	8	1	0
	75%	22%	2%	0%	63%	33%	4%	0%
I feel irritable.	93	96	17	5	10	13	1	0
	44%	45%	8%	2%	42%	54%	4%	0%
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	126	65	15	5	10	14	0	0
	60%	31%	7%	2%	42%	58%	0%	0%
I feel emotionally numb.	138	48	17	7	13	7	4	0
	66%	23%	8%	3%	54%	29%	17%	0%
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	167	28	9	7	17	5	1	1
	79%	13%	4%	3%	71%	21%	4%	4%
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	148	53	5	2	14	9	1	0
	71%	25%	2%	1%	58%	38%	4%	0%
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	191	17	1	0	21	3	0	0
	91%	8%	0%	0%	88%	13%	0%	0%

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

The Kruskal-Wallis test found significant differences between the Active Components and Reserve Components in two of the fourteen items for Assignments, Reading, and Memory. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-25 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Service Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	.981	4.566	3.686	2.837	.047
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.322	.033	.055	.092	.829

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.
Chi-Square	5.435	.018	.096	2.083	.607
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.020	.895	.757	.149	.436

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	1.427	.989	.606	2.518
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.232	.320	.436	.113

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Thirty six percent of the Active Components officers had difficulty starting assignments compared to 58 percent of the Reserve Components officers. Half of the Reserve Components officers (50 percent) responded true to “Though I know what to do, I can’t seem to do it” while only 27 percent of Active Components officers responded true.

Table 4-26 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects for Service Components

Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects Count and Percent	Active Components				Reserve Components			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	189	17	3	2	23	1	0	0
	90%	8%	1%	1%	96%	4%	0%	0%
I have difficulty starting assignments.	134	65	8	4	10	11	3	0
	64%	31%	4%	2%	42%	46%	13%	0%
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	139	62	6	4	11	11	2	0
	66%	29%	3%	2%	46%	46%	8%	0%
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	116	75	12	8	8	14	2	0
	55%	36%	6%	4%	33%	58%	8%	0%
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	85	75	37	14	8	13	3	0
	40%	36%	18%	7%	33%	54%	13%	0%
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	154	46	7	3	12	10	2	0
	73%	22%	3%	1%	50%	42%	8%	0%
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	119	68	20	4	14	7	3	0
	56%	32%	9%	2%	58%	29%	13%	0%
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	163	34	10	3	18	4	2	0
	78%	16%	5%	1%	75%	17%	8%	0%
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	118	77	9	6	17	4	2	0
	56%	37%	4%	3%	74%	17%	9%	0%
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	37	114	38	21	3	12	8	1
	18%	54%	18%	10%	13%	50%	33%	4%
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	163	33	10	3	16	6	2	0
	78%	16%	5%	1%	67%	25%	8%	0%
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	91	91	20	8	7	14	3	0
	43%	43%	10%	4%	29%	58%	13%	0%
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	145	51	11	3	14	10	0	0
	69%	24%	5%	1%	58%	42%	0%	0%
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	126	62	15	6	10	11	3	0
	60%	30%	7%	3%	42%	46%	13%	0%

Overall Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis test found significant differences between the Active Components officers and officers of the Reserve Components for one of the ten scale items for Overall Effects. Reserve Components were more likely to mark true for, “I have difficulty moving on with my life.” Seventeen percent of Reserve and National Guard officers had difficulty moving on with life compared to 5 percent of Army officers.

Table 4-27 Overall Effects for Service Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.027	2.996	.093	.106	4.710
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.870	.083	.761	.745	.030

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	.655	.001	.640	1.146	.152
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.418	.980	.424	.284	.697

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Table 4-28 Overall Effects for Service Components

Overall Effects Count and Percent	Active Components		Reserve Components	
	True	False	True	False
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	24	187	3	21
	11%	89%	13%	88%
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	32	178	7	17
	15%	85%	29%	71%
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	68	143	7	17
	32%	68%	29%	71%
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	156	55	17	7
	74%	26%	71%	29%
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	11	200	4	20
	5%	95%	17%	83%
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	70	141	6	18
	33%	67%	25%	75%
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	52	158	6	18
	25%	75%	25%	75%
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	150	60	19	5
	71%	29%	79%	21%
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	107	103	15	9
	51%	49%	63%	38%
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	47	162	6	17
	22%	78%	26%	74%

Recovery Time

The Kruskal-Wallis Test for the amount of time needed to recover when a triggering event is experienced found no significant differences between Active Components and Reserve Components.

Table 4-29 Recovery Time Kruskal-Wallis Table for Service Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	.217	.246
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.642	.620

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Though no significant differences were found using the Kruskal-Wallis Tests, we see in tables 4-30 and 4-31 that there were differences between the Active Components and the Reserve Components the Kruskal-Wallis Test is unable to detect due to the low number of scale items and low number of Reserve Components officers. Active Components do have higher numbers when compared to Reserve Components for requiring up to an hour and a few hours. Only Active Components officers required more than a day.

Table 4-30 Maximum Time to Normal for Service Components

When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?	Active Components	Reserve Components
A few minutes	139	12
Up to an hour	36	6
A few hours	24	6
More than a day	6	0

Table 4-31 Recovery Time for Service Components

Recovery Time Count and Percent	Active Components			Reserve Components		
	True	False	N/A	True	False	N/A
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	127	35	46	16	3	5
	61%	17%	22%	67%	13%	21%

Table 4-32 Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again for Service Components

Recovery Time Count and Percent	Active Components			Reserve Components		
	True	False	N/A	True	False	N/A
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	41	118	47	6	13	5
	20%	57%	23%	25%	54%	21%

In summary, Active Component officers were more likely to have witnessed a friend become a casualty and they were more likely to have handled or uncovered human remains. However, when it came to starting assignments the Reserve Components officers reported a higher percentage of officers who had this difficulty. The Reserve Components officers also had a higher percentage of officers reporting, “Though I know what to do, I can’t seem to do it.” The Reserve Components officers were also more likely to mark true for “I have difficulty moving on with my life.” Active Component officers, however, reported requiring more than a few minutes to return to normal.

Research Question 6: Are there differences between combat deployments?

Differences between Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom

Due to the overlap of experiences only three groups could be compared: (1) those with OEF experience but no OIF, (2) those with OIF but no OEF, and (3) those with both OEF and OIF. There were 26 officers (11 percent of participants) who had OEF experience but no OIF experience and 78 officers (34 percent) who had OIF experience but no OEF experience. The other 55 percent (129) had both OEF and OIF experience. Two individuals had only Operation New Dawn (OND) experience but neither OEF nor OIF. They were excluded in comparisons.

Combat Experience Types

The Kruskal-Wallis showed significant differences between those who had combat deployments in support of either OEF or OIF or both for nine of the sixteen combat experience types. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-33 Combat Experience Types Kruskal-Wallis Tables for OEF, OIF, and Both OEF & OIF

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted.
Chi-Square	2.879	3.741	9.589	7.462	9.190	.398
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.237	.154	.008	.024	.010	.819

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.
Chi-Square	5.731	3.954	8.624	13.539	3.033	6.043
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.057	.138	.013	.001	.219	.049

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	5.264	8.278	10.089	13.962
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.072	.016	.006	.001

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Eighty eight percent of officers with both OEF & OIF experienced nearby explosions that could be physically felt. OIF officers were similar with 89 percent followed by OEF officers with 65 percent. Nearly half of the officers with either OEF & OIF experience or only OIF experienced nearby explosions several times (4+) whereas 27 percent of OEF officers reported several times. Eighty two percent of officers with both OEF and OIF saw dead bodies or human remains followed by 77 percent of OIF individuals and 62 percent of OEF individuals. Seventy six percent of officers with both OEF & OIF experience saw others get severely injured or killed followed by 65 percent of OIF officers and 48 percent of OEF officers. The officers with OIF or both OEF & OIF had significantly higher percentages for having experienced an IED explosion (71 percent OIF, 67 percent for both OEF & OIF, and 31 percent OEF) and for having been attacked or ambushed (67 percent OIF, 69 percent for both OEF & OIF, and 32 percent OEF).

Officers with either OIF experience or both OEF & OIF were significantly more likely to have uncovered human remains than OEF officers (47 percent for OEF & OIF, 40 percent OIF,

and 15 percent for OEF). OIF or both OEF & OIF officers were also more likely to have smelled decomposing bodies (58 percent for OEF & OIF, 59 percent for OIF, and 35 percent for OEF). Individuals with OIF or both OEF & OIF were more likely to have been responsible for a death (48 percent for OEF & OIF, 29 percent for OIF, and 15 percent for OEF). Individuals with OIF only or both OEF & OIF experience were also more likely to have thought they would never survive (27 percent for OEF & OIF, 35 percent for OIF, and 12 percent for OEF).

Table 4-34 Combat Experience Types for OEF, OIF, and Both OEF & OIF

Combat Experience Types Count and Percent	OEF Only			OIF Only			Both OEF and OIF		
	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	0	0	0	4	3	1	4	6	3
	0%	0%	0%	5%	4%	1%	3%	5%	2%
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	5	4	3	13	22	4	24	34	19
	19%	15%	12%	17%	28%	5%	19%	26%	15%
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	3	5	4	10	21	20	14	42	42
	12%	20%	16%	13%	27%	26%	11%	33%	33%
I smelled decomposing bodies.	3	5	1	9	22	15	13	27	35
	12%	19%	4%	12%	28%	19%	10%	21%	27%
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	4	6	7	12	19	36	7	44	63
	15%	23%	27%	15%	24%	46%	5%	34%	49%
I was sexually assaulted.	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
I was wounded/injured in combat.	0	0	0	12	0	0	23	1	0
	0%	0%	0%	15%	0%	0%	18%	1%	0%
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	0	0	0	2	6	3	5	6	5
	0%	0%	0%	3%	8%	4%	4%	5%	4%
I thought I would never survive.	1	1	1	6	17	4	15	28	12
	4%	4%	4%	8%	22%	5%	12%	22%	9%
I was responsible for a death.	0	2	2	2	14	7	10	21	31
	0%	8%	8%	3%	18%	9%	8%	16%	24%
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	3	1	0	11	12	1	12	10	7
	12%	4%	0%	14%	15%	1%	9%	8%	5%
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	5	3	8	5	19	35	8	36	62
	19%	12%	31%	6%	25%	45%	6%	28%	48%
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	2	3	2	8	20	13	13	36	16
	8%	12%	8%	10%	26%	17%	10%	28%	12%
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	1	2	1	13	7	11	22	21	18
	4%	8%	4%	17%	9%	14%	17%	16%	14%
I was attacked or ambushed.	0	4	4	8	18	26	12	28	48
	0%	16%	16%	10%	23%	33%	9%	22%	38%
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	3	3	2	10	21	24	18	29	39
	12%	12%	8%	13%	27%	31%	14%	22%	30%

Classroom Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis showed significant differences between those who had combat deployments in support of either OEF only, OIF only, or both OEF and OIF for three of the 14 classroom effects. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-35 Classroom Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for OEF, OIF, and Both OEF & OIF

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	1.821	2.446	3.800	.734	1.070
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.402	.294	.150	.693	.586

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).
Chi-Square	3.301	11.702	3.457	9.329	12.054
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.192	.003	.178	.009	.002

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	4.081	2.110	5.474	2.916
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.130	.348	.065	.233

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

The percentage of officers who had either OIF experience but no OEF or both OEF & OIF experience were more than twice as high for having had physical reactions to something that got them upset (i.e. Traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument) (51 percent for both OEF & OIF, 37 percent OIF and 15 percent OEF). Individual with either OIF or both OEF and OIF experience were also significantly more likely to have been angered by classroom discussions (55 percent for OEF & OIF, 40 percent for OIF only, and 23 percent for OEF only) and felt irritable (64 percent for OIF, 59 percent for OIF only, and 35 percent for OEF).

Table 4-36 Classroom Effects for OEF, OIF, and Both OEF & OIF

Classroom Effects Count and Percent	OEF			OIF			Both OEF and OIF		
	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I am easily startled during class.	5	0	0	26	0	0	37	2	0
	19%	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%	29%	2%	0%
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	4	1	0	22	1	0	32	10	1
	15%	4%	0%	28%	1%	0%	25%	8%	1%
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	6	0	0	17	4	1	39	8	2
	23%	0%	0%	22%	5%	1%	30%	6%	2%
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	3	1	0	16	0	0	17	3	0
	12%	4%	0%	21%	0%	0%	13%	2%	0%
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	1	1	0	9	0	0	17	2	0
	4%	4%	0%	12%	0%	0%	13%	2%	0%
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	5	0	0	18	1	0	35	6	1
	19%	0%	0%	23%	1%	0%	27%	5%	1%
Classroom discussions anger me.	6	0	0	27	4	0	57	10	3
	23%	0%	0%	35%	5%	0%	45%	8%	2%
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	3	0	0	21	1	1	31	4	0
	12%	0%	0%	27%	1%	1%	24%	3%	0%
I feel irritable.	9	0	0	31	8	1	69	10	4
	35%	0%	0%	40%	10%	1%	53%	8%	3%
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	4	0	0	21	6	2	54	9	3
	15%	0%	0%	27%	8%	3%	42%	7%	2%
I feel emotionally numb.	7	1	0	14	5	3	34	15	4
	27%	4%	0%	18%	6%	4%	27%	12%	3%
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	3	0	1	8	2	4	22	8	3
	12%	0%	4%	10%	3%	5%	17%	6%	2%
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	3	0	0	23	5	0	36	1	2
	12%	0%	0%	29%	6%	0%	28%	1%	2%
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	0	0	0	8	0	0	12	1	0
	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	9%	1%	0%

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

The Kruskal-Wallis Test found two significant differences for assignments, reading, and memory effects. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-37 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Kruskal-Wallis Tables OEF, OIF, and Both OEF & OIF

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.
Chi-Square	1.630	3.615	6.140	5.403	4.403	5.600
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.443	.164	.046	.067	.111	.061

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.
Chi-Square	2.653	4.901	3.310	5.293
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.265	.086	.191	.071

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	4.262	3.695	8.089	2.734
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.119	.158	.018	.255

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Officers who had OIF experience but no OEF experience and those with both OEF & OIF were more likely to report having had difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment (38 percent for both OEF & OIF, 30 percent for OIF only, and 12 percent for OEF). They were also more likely to felt anxiety when working on assignments (33 percent for both OEF & OIF, 46 percent OIF and 23 percent OEF).

Table 4-38 Assignments, Reading, Memory Effects for OEF, OIF, and Both OEF & OIF

Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects Count and Percent	OEF			OIF			Both OEF and OIF		
	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Sometimes	Often	All the time
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	1	0	0	6	0	1	11	3	1
	4%	0%	0%	8%	0%	1%	9%	2%	1%
I have difficulty starting assignments.	6	0	0	29	3	1	41	8	3
	23%	0%	0%	37%	4%	1%	32%	6%	2%
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	6	0	0	30	5	1	37	3	3
	23%	0%	0%	38%	6%	1%	29%	2%	2%
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	6	1	0	31	4	2	51	9	6
	23%	4%	0%	40%	5%	3%	40%	7%	5%
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	11	2	0	26	13	5	50	25	9
	42%	8%	0%	33%	17%	6%	39%	19%	7%
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	3	0	0	25	2	1	28	7	2
	12%	0%	0%	32%	3%	1%	22%	5%	2%
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	10	0	0	24	5	2	41	18	2
	38%	0%	0%	31%	6%	3%	32%	14%	2%
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	1	1	0	12	3	1	25	8	2
	4%	4%	0%	15%	4%	1%	20%	6%	2%
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	7	0	1	24	4	1	50	7	4
	27%	0%	4%	32%	5%	1%	39%	5%	3%
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	18	2	0	40	14	10	67	29	12
	69%	8%	0%	52%	18%	13%	52%	22%	9%
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	2	0	0	14	5	0	23	7	3
	8%	0%	0%	18%	6%	0%	18%	5%	2%
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	12	0	0	39	7	3	53	16	5
	46%	0%	0%	51%	9%	4%	41%	12%	4%
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	3	0	0	21	2	0	37	9	3
	12%	0%	0%	27%	3%	0%	29%	7%	2%
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	8	0	0	30	7	0	35	11	6
	31%	0%	0%	39%	9%	0%	27%	9%	5%

Overall Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis showed significant differences between those who had combat deployments in support of either OIF or both OEF & OIF and those who had combat deployments only to OEF for three of the 10 overall items. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-39 Overall Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for OEF, OIF, and Both OEF & OIF

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.	My combat experience changed the way I learn.
Chi-Square	3.269	2.272	1.202	6.046	1.336	7.785
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.195	.321	.548	.049	.513	.020

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	7.513	5.042	5.290	2.005
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.023	.080	.071	.367

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Thirty two percent of officers with both OEF & OIF got angry about what happened during their combat experiences compared to 17 percent for OIF officers and 15 percent of OEF officers. Thirty nine percent of officers with both OEF & OIF believed their combat experience changed the way they learn compared to 29 percent for OIF and 12 percent for OEF only officers. Seventy seven percent of officers with both OEF & OIF experience believed combat changed the way they view the world followed by 76 percent for OIF officers and 54 percent for OEF officers.

Table 4-40 Overall Effects for OEF, OIF, and Both OEF & OIF

Overall Effects Count and Percent	OEF		OIF		Both OEF and OIF	
	True	False	True	False	True	False
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	1	25	7	71	19	110
	4%	96%	9%	91%	15%	85%
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	4	22	9	69	25	103
	15%	85%	12%	88%	20%	80%
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	6	20	25	53	44	85
	23%	77%	32%	68%	34%	66%
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	14	12	59	19	99	30
	54%	46%	76%	24%	77%	23%
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	1	25	7	71	7	122
	4%	96%	9%	91%	5%	95%
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	3	23	23	55	50	79
	12%	88%	29%	71%	39%	61%
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	4	22	13	65	41	87
	15%	85%	17%	83%	32%	68%
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	14	12	58	20	96	32
	54%	46%	74%	26%	75%	25%
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	8	18	41	37	71	57
	31%	69%	53%	47%	55%	45%
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	5	21	22	55	26	101
	19%	81%	29%	71%	20%	80%

Recovery Time

Two items asked regarding recovery time were statements the officers marked as being true or false: “the amount of time it takes to varies depending on the trigger,” and “sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.” The Kruskal-Wallis Tests revealed significant differences between those who had combat deployments in support of either OEF, OIF, or both OEF & OIF for both items.

Table 4-41 Recovery Time Kruskal-Wallis Table for OEF and OIF

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	13.387	7.455
df	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.001	.024

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Sixty nine percent with OIF experience but no OEF experience said true that the amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger compared to 31 percent of OEF experienced officers. Sixty three percent of participants with both OEF and OIF experience marked true. Nineteen percent of officers with OIF experience but no OEF experience marked true to “Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again” compared to 12 percent of those with OEF experience. Twenty four percent of those with both OEF and OIF experience marked true.

Table 4-42 Maximum Time to Normal for OEF and OIF

When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?	OEF	OIF	Both OEF and OIF
A few minutes	21	47	112
Up to an hour	2	15	30
A few hours	1	12	22
More than a day	1	2	4

Table 4-43 Recovery Time for OEF and OIF

Recovery Time	OEF	OIF	Both OEF and OIF
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	8	53	80
	31%	69%	63%

Table 4-44 Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again for OEF and OIF

Recovery Time	OEF	OIF	Both OEF and OIF
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	3	14	30
	12%	19%	24%

The GWOT spanned over 10 years with campaigns in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and as it came to an end, Operation New Dawn (OND). Due to the longevity of these campaigns and the sharing of resources in support of them, most combat veterans have experience in both OEF and OIF while few have OND experience. Thus, comparisons between OEF and OIF are limited in the number of officers who have only one or the other and not both. This study compared 26 officers with OEF experience to 78 officers with only OIF experience and 129 officers who had both OEF and OIF experience. The remaining participants in this study had only OND experience (2 officers).

Summary of OEF and OIF

The results showed differences in combat experiences for OEF, OIF, or a combination of both OEF & OIF deployments. OIF experienced officers and those with both OEF & OIF were more likely to have been attacked or ambushed, experienced explosions or IEDs, and had experience with dead or decomposing bodies. They were more likely to have been responsible for a death and felt as though they would not survive their combat deployment. These officers were more likely to have physical reactions simply because something got them wound up and they were more likely to be irritable. Classroom discussions were more likely to have angered them. These officers more likely felt anxiety when working on assignments and had difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.

OIF experienced officers were more likely to have reported that their combat experiences changed the way they view the world. A significantly higher percentage of officers with OIF experience or both OEF & OIF experience reported needing more than a few minutes to return to normal, several needed up to an hour, some needed a few hours, and seven needed more than a day to return to normal after something happened to cause physical or emotional difficulties. Many believed the amount of time depended on the trigger and 19-22 percent of them sometimes felt like they will never be normal again.

Differences between officers based on number of deployments into combat

A comparison was done between officers who had one, two, and three or more combat deployments to any of the three Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) campaigns (OEF, OIF, and OND) since 9/11. Though several officers reported having deployments to other locations in support of other campaigns, this comparison focused only on GWOT deployments.

Combat Experience Types

The Kruskal-Wallis Tests found significant differences for ten of the sixteen combat experience types. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-45 Combat Experience Types Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Number of Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted.
Chi-Square	1.816	11.559	17.184	7.118	10.747	.528
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.403	.003	.000	.028	.005	.768

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.
Chi-Square	2.792	4.472	11.216	12.974	.573	14.107
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.248	.107	.004	.002	.751	.001

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	4.253	10.729	16.102	16.597
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.119	.005	.000	.000

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Officers with only one or even two deployments into combat were less likely to have witnessed a friend become a casualty, see others get severely injured or killed, smell decomposing bodies, experience a nearby explosion that could be physically felt, be responsible for a death, see dead bodies or human remains, handle or uncover human remains, be attacked or ambushed, or experience an IED explosion near them. They were also less likely to have felt they would never survive.

Table 4-46 Combat Experience Types for Number of GWOT Deployments

Combat Experience Types		Total GWOT Deployments		
		One	Two	Three or More
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	Once	7	12	23
	A few times (2-3)	5	17	38
	Several times (4+)		5	21
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	Once	4	11	8
	A few times (2-3)	5	16	49
	Several times (4+)	10	33	65
I thought I would never survive.	Once		9	13
	A few times (2-3)	3	13	30
	Several times (4+)		4	13
I was responsible for a death.	Once	1	5	6
	A few times (2-3)	1	14	22
	Several times (4+)	1	9	30
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	Once	5	7	6
	A few times (2-3)	4	17	37
	Several times (4+)	7	33	65
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	Once	2	12	22
	A few times (2-3)		7	23
	Several times (4+)	2	11	17
I was attacked or ambushed.	Once	3	2	15
	A few times (2-3)	2	18	30
	Several times (4+)	4	28	46
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	Once	5	7	19
	A few times (2-3)	4	17	32
	Several times (4+)	2	19	44
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	Once	1	3	4
	A few times (2-3)		2	7
	Several times (4+)		1	3
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	Once	6	8	13
	A few times (2-3)	4	19	45
	Several times (4+)	3	20	43
I smelled decomposing bodies.	Once	6	8	11
	A few times (2-3)	3	16	35
	Several times (4+)	3	15	33
I was sexually assaulted.	Once		1	1
I was wounded/injured in combat.	Once	2	10	23
	A few times (2-3)			1
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	Once		3	4
	A few times (2-3)		2	10
	Several times (4+)	1	1	6
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	Once	3	10	13
	A few times (2-3)	3	7	13
	Several times (4+)		1	7

Table 4-47 Combat Experience Types for Number of GWOT Deployments continued

Combat Experience Types Continued		Total GWOT Deployments		
		One	Two	Three or More
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	Once	2	7	14
	A few times (2-3)	4	19	37
	Several times (4+)	3	10	17

Classroom Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis Tests found significant differences for three of the fourteen classroom effects. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-48 Classroom Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Number of Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	3.356	1.272	2.740	2.843	3.034
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.187	.529	.254	.241	.219

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).
Chi-Square	6.695	8.762	5.020	12.479	10.446
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.035	.013	.081	.002	.005

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	4.391	.907	2.495	1.685
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.111	.635	.287	.431

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Officers with three or more combat deployments were significantly more likely to be angered by classroom discussions, significantly more likely to have felt irritable, and were more likely to have had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).

Table 4-49 Classroom Effects for Number of GWOT Deployments

Classroom Effects		Total GWOT Deployments		
		One	Two	Three or More
I am easily startled during class.	Sometimes	5	23	40
	Often		1	1
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	Sometimes	6	17	35
	Often	1	3	8
	All the time		1	
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Sometimes	6	17	40
	Often	1	3	8
	All the time		2	1
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	Sometimes	3	9	24
	Often		1	3
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	Sometimes	2	7	18
	Often			3
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Sometimes	3	18	37
	Often		1	6
	All the time		1	
Classroom discussions anger me.	Sometimes	8	25	57
	Often		5	9
	All the time			3
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	Sometimes	3	20	32
	Often			5
	All the time		1	
I feel irritable.	Sometimes	9	37	63
	Often		4	19
	All the time		1	4
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	Sometimes	5	24	50
	Often		6	9
	All the time		2	3
I feel emotionally numb.	Sometimes	6	14	35
	Often	1	7	13
	All the time		2	5
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	Sometimes	4	9	20
	Often		4	6
	All the time	1	2	5
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	Sometimes	6	20	36
	Often		3	3
	All the time		1	1
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	Sometimes	1	7	12
	Often		1	

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

The Kruskal-Wallis Tests found no significant differences for any of the fourteen assignments, reading, and memory effects.

Table 4-50 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Number of Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	1.632	1.181	2.466	4.545	5.491
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.442	.554	.291	.103	.064

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.
Chi-Square	3.111	2.934	2.256	4.723
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.211	.231	.324	.094

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	.982	1.339	1.139	2.352	1.617
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.612	.512	.566	.308	.446

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Table 4-51 Assignments, Reading, and Memory for Number of GWOT Deployments

Assignments, Reading, and Memory		Total GWOT Deployments		
		One	Two	Three or More
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	Sometimes	2	2	14
	Often		1	2
	All the time		2	
I have difficulty starting assignments.	Sometimes	10	25	41
	Often		3	8
	All the time		2	2
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	Sometimes	14	22	37
	Often	1	4	3
	All the time		1	3
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	Sometimes	10	31	48
	Often	1	6	7
	All the time		3	5
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	Sometimes	11	30	47
	Often	3	11	26
	All the time		7	7
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	Sometimes	6	19	31
	Often		5	4
	All the time		1	2
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	Sometimes	10	21	44
	Often		9	14
	All the time		2	2
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	Sometimes	4	13	21
	Often		3	9
	All the time		2	1
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	Sometimes	6	28	47
	Often		3	8
	All the time	1	1	4
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	Sometimes	18	46	62
	Often	7	10	29
	All the time		7	15
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	Sometimes	5	13	21
	Often		3	9
	All the time		2	1
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	Sometimes	16	33	56
	Often	1	5	17
	All the time		3	5
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	Sometimes	8	25	28
	Often		2	9
	All the time		1	2
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	Sometimes	10	22	42
	Often	1	5	12
	All the time		1	5

Overall Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis Tests found no significant differences for any of the ten overall effects.

Table 4-52 Overall Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Number of Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.883	.370	3.925	2.622	1.005
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.643	.831	.141	.270	.605

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	2.720	3.729	5.421	5.689	1.724
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.257	.155	.067	.058	.422

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Table 4-53 Overall Effects for Number of GWOT Deployments

Overall Effects		Total GWOT Deployments		
		One	Two	Three or More
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	True	2	9	16
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	True	4	12	23
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	True	6	28	41
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	True	19	54	100
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	True	1	6	8
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	True	6	24	46
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	True	4	16	38
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	True	17	52	100
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	True	10	41	71
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	True	6	20	27

Recovery Time

The Kruskal-Wallis Tests found significant differences for one of the recovery time questions. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-54 Recovery Time Kruskal-Wallis Table for Number of Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	7.150	4.144
df	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.028	.126

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Table 4-55 Maximum Time to Normal for Number of GWOT Deployments

Maximum Time to Normal		Total GWOT Deployments		
		One	Two	Three or More
When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?	A few minutes	22	44	86
	Up to an hour	4	14	23
	A few hours	2	12	15
	More than a day	1	1	4

Table 4-56 Recovery Time for Number of GWOT Deployments

Recovery Time		Total GWOT Deployments		
		One	Two	Three or More
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	True	17	52	75
	False	5	9	23
	N/A	9	9	34

Table 4-57 Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again for Total GWOT Deployments

Recovery Time		Total GWOT Deployments		
		One	Two	Three or More
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	True	2	15	30
	False	19	43	70
	N/A	9	11	32

As could be expected, officers with more combat deployments reported having more combat experiences. More than half of them had experience in both OIF and OEF. Many of them had multiple deployments to both locations. They saw more friends become casualties and more reported being responsible for a death. Though officers with more deployments did not report

more feelings of powerlessness, they did report higher levels for thinking they would never survive. These officers had higher percentages for being irritable, being angered during classroom experiences, having had disturbing memories while in class and having had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up. Their abilities to complete assignments, their reading challenges, and their memory were not significantly different based on number of GWOT deployments and their overall effects were also unchanged. However, significantly more officers with three or more GWOT deployments required more than a few minutes to return to normal when something caused them physical or emotional difficulties.

Differences between officers based on total years of combat experience since 2001.

Comparisons were made between those who had less than one year, more than one but less than three years, more than three but less than five years, and those who had five or more years of deployments into a combat zone since 2001. Significant differences appeared in all but four of the combat experience types. When comparing the two groups of less experience (less than one year and more than one but less than three years), no significant differences were found except for being attacked or ambushed. Most (73 percent) of those who had more than one but less than three years of experience had been attacked or ambushed compared to 14 percent of those with less than one year of combat experience. When comparing the two groups with more time deployed (more than three but less than five years compared to five years or more), the only significant difference was witnessing a friend become a casualty. Only 65 percent of those with more than 3 but less than five years compared to 100 percent of those who had five or more years of experience had witnessed a friend become a casualty (severely injured or killed).

Combat Experience Types

The two groups of less than three years were combined together and the two groups of officers with three or more years of experiences were combined to derive 157 officers who had less than 3 years of combat experience and 78 officers who had more than 3 years of combat experience. Comparing those two groups revealed significant differences in nine of the 16 items. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-58 Combat Experience Types Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Total Years in Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted.
Chi-Square	.263	11.791	14.722	4.508	5.418	.998
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.608	.001	.000	.034	.020	.318

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.
Chi-Square	5.527	7.103	8.929	10.148	1.338	9.076
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.019	.008	.003	.001	.247	.003

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	1.856	12.539	2.418	7.455
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.173	.000	.120	.006

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

More years spent in combat resulted in more combat trauma experiences. However, there were no significant differences found for being attacked or ambushed, feeling betrayed by someone in their unit, or times of feeling powerless.

Table 4-59 Combat Experience Types for Total Years Served in Combat

Combat Experience Types Count and Percent	Less Than 3 Years				3 or More Years			
	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	142	5	6	2	69	3	3	2
	92%	3%	4%	1%	90%	4%	4%	3%
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	82	27	38	10	25	15	22	16
	52%	17%	24%	6%	32%	19%	28%	21%
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	56	24	43	33	16	4	25	33
	36%	15%	28%	21%	21%	5%	32%	42%
I smelled decomposing bodies.	76	18	35	28	29	7	19	23
	48%	11%	22%	18%	37%	9%	24%	29%
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	33	18	37	69	2	5	33	38
	21%	11%	24%	44%	3%	6%	42%	49%
I was sexually assaulted.	155	1	0	0	78	0	0	0
	99%	1%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
I was wounded/injured in combat.	139	18	0	0	60	17	1	0
	89%	11%	0%	0%	77%	22%	1%	0%
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	145	3	7	2	63	4	5	6
	92%	2%	4%	1%	81%	5%	6%	8%
I thought I would never survive.	110	13	27	7	39	9	19	10
	70%	8%	17%	4%	51%	12%	25%	13%
I was responsible for a death.	108	7	23	19	38	5	14	21
	69%	4%	15%	12%	49%	6%	18%	27%
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	122	18	13	4	56	8	10	4
	78%	11%	8%	3%	72%	10%	13%	5%
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	44	15	37	61	9	3	21	44
	28%	10%	24%	39%	12%	4%	27%	57%
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	87	15	34	21	35	8	25	10
	55%	10%	22%	13%	45%	10%	32%	13%
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	103	20	19	13	34	16	11	17
	66%	13%	12%	8%	44%	21%	14%	22%
I was attacked or ambushed.	63	11	32	49	22	9	18	29
	41%	7%	21%	32%	28%	12%	23%	37%
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	69	16	34	38	17	15	19	27
	44%	10%	22%	24%	22%	19%	24%	35%

Classroom Effects

When comparing the total time spent in combat, the Kruskal-Wallis test found no significant difference in feeling uncomfortable in class. However, significant differences were found in all other scale items. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-60 Classroom Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Total Years in Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).
Chi-Square	14.818	10.630	8.015	8.009
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.001	.005	.005

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am still on alert for combat when in class.	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.
Chi-Square	11.173	9.559	14.253	9.033	8.166
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.001	.002	.000	.003	.004

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	8.700	7.402	5.726	2.891	6.161
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.003	.007	.017	.089	.013

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Officers with more than 3 years of combat deployment experience had more than twice as high percentages for having been easily startled during class and having experienced triggers that made them feel as if a stressful combat experience was happening again (as if you were reliving it). There were also more likely to have been still on alert for combat when in class and had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up (i.e. Traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument). While only 6 percent of participants with less than 3 years avoided class activities/situations because they reminded them of a stressful combat experience, 16 percent of participants with more than 3 years of combat deployment experience avoided class. Participants with more than 3 years of combat deployment also reported significantly higher percentages for having been easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience, having felt distant or cut off from classmates, having had disturbing memories of a

stressful combat experience while in class. They were more likely to have felt anger during classroom discussions, felt irritable, felt emotionally numb, and were tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by their combat experience.

Table 4-61 Classroom Effects for Total Years Served in Combat

Classroom Effects Count and Percent	Less Than 3 Years				3 Years or More			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I am easily startled during class.	123	33	1	0	42	35	1	0
	78%	21%	1%	0%	54%	45%	1%	0%
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	120	32	4	1	44	26	8	0
	76%	20%	3%	1%	56%	33%	10%	0%
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	113	37	5	1	43	26	7	2
	72%	24%	3%	1%	55%	33%	9%	3%
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	138	17	2	0	57	19	2	0
	88%	11%	1%	0%	73%	24%	3%	0%
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	143	11	1	0	59	16	2	0
	92%	7%	1%	0%	77%	21%	3%	0%
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	123	30	3	1	46	28	4	0
	78%	19%	2%	1%	59%	36%	5%	0%
Classroom discussions anger me.	98	52	6	1	29	38	8	2
	62%	33%	4%	1%	38%	49%	10%	3%
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	125	32	0	0	49	23	5	1
	80%	20%	0%	0%	63%	29%	6%	1%
I feel irritable.	78	68	9	2	25	41	9	3
	50%	43%	6%	1%	32%	53%	12%	4%
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	103	40	10	4	33	39	5	1
	66%	25%	6%	3%	42%	50%	6%	1%
I feel emotionally numb.	109	34	12	1	42	21	9	6
	70%	22%	8%	1%	54%	27%	12%	8%
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	130	18	5	4	54	15	5	4
	83%	11%	3%	3%	69%	19%	6%	5%
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	114	36	3	2	48	26	3	0
	74%	23%	2%	1%	62%	34%	4%	0%
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	148	8	1	0	64	12	0	0
	94%	5%	1%	0%	84%	16%	0%	0%

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

The Kruskal-Wallis Test found significant differences in five of the fourteen scale items when comparing the total time spent in combat. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-62 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Total Years in Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	14.935	1.191	.044	.378	.799
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.275	.834	.539	.372

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.
Chi-Square	.685	5.198	20.607	8.738
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.408	.023	.000	.003

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	1.682	8.988	2.670	.332	3.825
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.195	.003	.102	.564	.051

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Over half (54 percent) of officers with three or more years of combat deployments caught themselves thinking about their combat experiences while working on assignments compared to 36 percent of those with less than three years of combat deployments and 54 percent allowed distractions to interfere with completing assignments compared to 38 percent of those with less than three years. Some (21 percent) of those with three or more years of combat deployments believed their combat experiences affected their ability to complete assignments compared to 4

percent of those with less than three years of combat deployments, and 40 percent believed their combat experiences changed how well they accomplished assignments compared to 14 percent of those with less than three years of combat deployments. Additionally, 35 percent of those with three or more years of combat deployments believed their combat experiences negatively affected their ability to remember what they read compared to 17 percent for officers with less than three years of combat deployments.

Table 4-63 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects for Total Years in Combat

Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects	Less Than 3 Years				3 Years or More			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	150	5	1	1	62	13	2	1
	96%	3%	1%	1%	79%	17%	3%	1%
I have difficulty starting assignments.	100	48	6	3	44	28	5	1
	64%	31%	4%	2%	56%	36%	6%	1%
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	101	48	5	3	49	25	3	1
	64%	31%	3%	2%	63%	32%	4%	1%
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	85	58	9	5	39	31	5	3
	54%	37%	6%	3%	50%	40%	6%	4%
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	66	57	22	12	27	31	18	2
	42%	36%	14%	8%	35%	40%	23%	3%
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	114	36	4	3	52	20	5	0
	73%	23%	3%	2%	68%	26%	6%	0%
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	97	45	12	3	36	30	11	1
	62%	29%	8%	2%	46%	38%	14%	1%
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	134	18	3	1	47	20	9	2
	86%	12%	2%	1%	60%	26%	12%	3%
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	99	50	4	2	36	31	7	4
	64%	32%	3%	1%	46%	40%	9%	5%
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	27	89	28	12	13	37	18	10
	17%	57%	18%	8%	17%	47%	23%	13%
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	129	20	4	3	50	19	8	0
	83%	13%	3%	2%	65%	25%	10%	0%
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	70	69	13	4	28	36	10	4
	45%	44%	8%	3%	36%	46%	13%	5%
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	107	43	4	2	52	18	7	1
	69%	28%	3%	1%	67%	23%	9%	1%
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	97	47	10	2	39	26	8	4
	62%	30%	6%	1%	51%	34%	10%	5%

Overall Effects

Ten items relating to the overall effects from their combat experiences were asked. These items were provided as statements for participants to mark if the statement was true or false for them. The Kruskal-Wallis Test found significant differences in seven of the ten scale items when comparing the total time spent in combat.

Table 4-64 Overall Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Total Years in Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.781	.651	5.779	4.258	5.171
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.377	.420	.016	.039	.023

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	8.343	7.715	8.919	9.100	.638
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.004	.005	.003	.003	.425

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Nearly half (42 percent) of officers who spent three or more years deployed into combat experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience compared to 27 percent of those with less than three years. Most (82 percent) officers who spent three or more years deployed into combat believed combat changed the way they view the world compared to 69 percent with less than three years and 85 percent marked true to “I am a different person than I was prior to combat” compared to 66 percent of those with less than three years of combat deployments. Nearly half (45 percent) of officers who spent three or more years deployed believed combat experience changed the way they learn compared to 26 percent of those with less than three years and 66 percent believed their deployments increased their personal stress levels compared to 45 percent of those with less than three years of combat deployment. Thirty six percent of officers with three or more years of combat deployments got angry about what happened during their combat experiences compared to 19 percent of those with less than three years who got angry

about what happened. Twelve percent of them had difficulty moving on with their life compared to 4 percent of those with less than three years who had difficulty moving on with their life.

Table 4-65 Overall Effects for Total Years in Combat

Overall Effects Count and Percent	Less Than 3 Years		3 Years or More	
	True	False	True	False
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	16	141	11	67
	10%	90%	14%	86%
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	24	133	15	62
	15%	85%	19%	81%
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	42	115	33	45
	27%	73%	42%	58%
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	109	48	64	14
	69%	31%	82%	18%
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	6	151	9	69
	4%	96%	12%	88%
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	41	116	35	43
	26%	74%	45%	55%
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	30	126	28	50
	19%	81%	36%	64%
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	103	53	66	12
	66%	34%	85%	15%
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	71	86	51	26
	45%	55%	66%	34%
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	33	122	20	57
	21%	79%	26%	74%

Recovery Time

The Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed no significant difference between the total amounts of time spent in combat for the amount of time needed to return to normal after experiencing a triggering event.

Table 4-66 Recovery Time Kruskal-Wallis Table for Total Years in Combat Deployments

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	.367	3.293
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.545	.070

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Table 4-67 Maximum Time to Normal for Total Years in Combat

Maximum Time to Normal	Less Than 3 Years in Combat Deployments	3 Years or More in Combat Deployments
A few minutes	105	46
Up to an hour	24	17
A few hours	19	10
More than a day	3	3

Table 4-68 Recovery Time for Total Years in Combat

Recovery Time Count and Percent	Less Than 3 Years in Combat Deployments			3 Years or More in Combat Deployments		
	True	False	N/A	True	False	N/A
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	96	28	30	47	10	21
	62%	18%	19%	40%	13%	27%

Table 4-69 Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again for Total Years in Combat

Recovery Time Count and Percent	Less Than 3 Years in Combat Deployments			3 Years or More in Combat Deployments		
	True	False	N/A	True	False	N/A
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	22	96	34	25	35	18
	14%	63%	22%	32%	45%	23%

Many of the officers who reported spending more than three years in combat since October 2001 experienced multiple combat locations and multiple types of combat experiences. Officers with more years of combat were more likely have witnessed friends become casualties, witnessed others get severely injured or killed, or were responsible for a death. They had more experience with dead bodies, witnessed more brutality, and experienced more explosions or IEDs. They were more likely to have been wounded/injured in combat and didn't think they would survive their combat deployment. They reported higher classroom effects than others and had more difficulty with assignments and reading. They were more likely to have caught themselves thinking about their combat experiences while working on assignments or allowed distractions to affect their ability to complete assignments. They experienced more flashbacks, got angry about their combat experiences, reported being changed or different, and had increased personal stress levels due to their deployments. Their combat experience changed the way they learn. Thirty two percent of them sometimes felt like they will never be normal again.

Research Question 7: Are there differences between genders?

There were 25 females who responded to the survey, 23 Army officers and 2 Marines. Three officers chose not to disclose their gender and the remaining 207 participants marked male.

Combat Experience Types

The Kruskal-Wallis showed significant differences between males and females on seven of the 16 scale items. The scale items with differences are in bold text in the Test Statistics table.

Table 4-70 Combat Experience Types Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Gender

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted.
Chi-Square	2.769	2.261	9.752	5.499	7.330	.243
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.096	.133	.002	.019	.007	.622

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.
Chi-Square	1.213	3.507	1.775	8.545	1.816	12.250
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.271	.061	.183	.003	.178	.000

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	.395	.757	10.303	10.356
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.530	.384	.001	.001

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

None of the females had hand to hand combat, witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners, or were sexually assaulted. Females were less likely to have seen others get severely injured or killed and were less likely to have been responsible for a death. They were less likely to smelt decomposing bodies or see dead bodies or human remains. Females were less likely to have been attacked or ambushed, less likely to have felt a nearby explosion, and less

likely to have experienced an IED explosion. Though it did not constitute a significant difference, 60 percent of females reported times when “I felt powerless” compared to 46 percent of males; and, 36 percent of females felt betrayed by someone in their unit compared to 23 percent of males feeling betrayed. “I was sexually assaulted” had only one response from a male.

Table 4-71 Combat Experience Types for Gender

Combat Experience Types Count and Percent	Male				Female			
	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	183	8	9	4	25	0	0	0
	90%	4%	4%	2%	100%	0%	0%	0%
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	91	38	53	25	15	3	6	1
	44%	18%	26%	12%	60%	12%	24%	4%
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	58	23	64	61	14	5	3	3
	28%	11%	31%	30%	56%	20%	12%	12%
I smelled decomposing bodies.	87	23	51	46	18	1	2	4
	42%	11%	25%	22%	72%	4%	8%	16%
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	27	20	61	99	8	3	8	6
	13%	10%	29%	48%	32%	12%	32%	24%
I was sexually assaulted.	205	1	0	0	25	0	0	0
	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
I was wounded/injured in combat.	173	33	1	0	23	2	0	0
	84%	16%	0%	0%	92%	8%	0%	0%
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	181	7	12	7	25	0	0	0
	87%	3%	6%	3%	100%	0%	0%	0%
I thought I would never survive.	129	20	42	15	19	2	3	1
	63%	10%	20%	7%	76%	8%	12%	4%
I was responsible for a death.	122	10	37	38	22	2	0	1
	59%	5%	18%	18%	88%	8%	0%	4%
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	160	21	19	7	16	5	3	1
	77%	10%	9%	3%	64%	20%	12%	4%
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	40	17	51	98	13	1	6	5
	19%	8%	25%	48%	52%	4%	24%	20%
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	112	17	48	30	10	4	10	1
	54%	8%	23%	14%	40%	16%	40%	4%
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	120	33	27	27	15	3	2	3
	58%	16%	13%	13%	65%	13%	9%	13%
I was attacked or ambushed.	67	19	46	73	17	1	4	3
	33%	9%	22%	36%	68%	4%	16%	12%
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	70	27	49	61	16	4	3	2
	34%	13%	24%	29%	64%	16%	12%	8%

Classroom Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis Test found no significant differences between males and females for classroom effects with the exception of having felt emotionally numb. The percentage for males who felt emotionally numb was more than twice that of females.

Table 4-72 Classroom Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Gender

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	.052	2.630	1.070	1.472	.013
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.819	.105	.301	.225	.909

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.
Chi-Square	3.691	.726	1.210	1.678
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.055	.394	.271	.195

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	1.036	4.504	1.437	.031	.267
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.309	.034	.231	.861	.605

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Table 4-73 Classroom Effects for Gender

Classroom Effects	Male				Female			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I am easily startled during class.	145	60	2	0	18	7	0	0
	70%	29%	1%	0%	72%	28%	0%	0%
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	140	55	11	1	21	3	1	0
	68%	27%	5%	0%	84%	12%	4%	0%
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	135	57	12	2	19	5	0	1
	66%	28%	6%	1%	76%	20%	0%	4%
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	169	35	3	0	23	1	1	0
	82%	17%	1%	0%	92%	4%	4%	0%
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	177	25	2	0	22	2	1	0
	87%	12%	1%	0%	88%	8%	4%	0%
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	145	54	7	1	22	3	0	0
	70%	26%	3%	0%	88%	12%	0%	0%
Classroom discussions anger me.	111	82	11	3	16	7	2	0
	54%	40%	5%	1%	64%	28%	8%	0%
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	151	51	5	0	21	3	0	1
	73%	25%	2%	0%	84%	12%	0%	4%
I feel irritable.	89	95	18	5	13	12	0	0
	43%	46%	9%	2%	52%	48%	0%	0%
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	117	70	15	5	16	9	0	0
	57%	34%	7%	2%	64%	36%	0%	0%
I feel emotionally numb.	128	51	21	6	21	3	0	1
	62%	25%	10%	3%	84%	12%	0%	4%
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	160	31	10	6	22	2	0	1
	77%	15%	5%	3%	88%	8%	0%	4%
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	143	54	5	2	18	6	1	0
	70%	26%	2%	1%	72%	24%	4%	0%
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	187	17	1	0	22	3	0	0
	91%	8%	0%	0%	88%	12%	0%	0%

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

The Kruskal-Wallis Test found no significant differences males and females regarding assignments, reading, and memory.

Table 4-74 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Gender

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	.084	1.438	.560	.035	1.613
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.772	.231	.454	.852	.204

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.
Chi-Square	.054	1.304	1.748	.005
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.816	.253	.186	.942

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	.378	.188	.201	.502	.006
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.539	.665	.654	.479	.936

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Table 4-75 Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects for Gender

Assignments, Reading, and Memory Effects Count and Percent	Male				Female			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	186	17	3	1	23	1	0	1
	90%	8%	1%	0%	92%	4%	0%	4%
I have difficulty starting assignments.	123	70	11	3	18	6	0	1
	59%	34%	5%	1%	72%	24%	0%	4%
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	134	62	7	4	14	10	1	0
	65%	30%	3%	2%	56%	40%	4%	0%
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	109	77	14	7	13	11	0	1
	53%	37%	7%	3%	52%	44%	0%	4%
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	81	74	38	14	11	12	2	0
	39%	36%	18%	7%	44%	48%	8%	0%
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	146	49	8	3	17	7	1	0
	71%	24%	4%	1%	68%	28%	4%	0%
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	115	67	22	3	17	6	1	1
	56%	32%	11%	1%	68%	24%	4%	4%
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	156	36	12	2	22	2	0	1
	76%	17%	6%	1%	88%	8%	0%	4%
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	121	68	11	6	13	11	0	0
	59%	33%	5%	3%	54%	46%	0%	0%
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	33	113	41	19	6	12	5	2
	16%	55%	20%	9%	24%	48%	20%	8%
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	157	34	11	3	20	4	1	0
	77%	17%	5%	1%	80%	16%	4%	0%
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	88	90	21	7	9	13	2	1
	43%	44%	10%	3%	36%	52%	8%	4%
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	141	52	10	3	15	9	1	0
	68%	25%	5%	1%	60%	36%	4%	0%
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	120	62	17	6	14	10	1	0
	59%	30%	8%	3%	56%	40%	4%	0%

Overall Effects

The Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed no significant differences between males and females in the overall effects.

Table 4-76 Overall Effects Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Gender

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.359	.297	1.818	.042	.280
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.549	.586	.178	.838	.596

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	1.818	1.130	.236	.007	.155
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.178	.288	.627	.931	.694

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Table 4-77 Overall Effects for Gender

Overall Effects Count and Percent	Male		Female	
	True	False	True	False
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	25	182	2	23
	12%	88%	8%	92%
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	34	173	5	19
	16%	84%	21%	79%
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	69	138	5	20
	33%	67%	20%	80%
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	153	54	18	7
	74%	26%	72%	28%
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	14	193	1	24
	7%	93%	4%	96%
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	69	138	5	20
	33%	67%	20%	80%
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	53	153	4	21
	26%	74%	16%	84%
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	147	59	19	6
	71%	29%	76%	24%
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	109	97	13	12
	53%	47%	52%	48%
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	48	156	5	20
	24%	76%	20%	80%

Recovery Time

The Kruskal-Wallis Test found no significant differences between males and females in the amount of time needed to return to normal after experiencing a triggering event.

Table 4-78 Recovery Time Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Gender

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	.007	.721
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.934	.396

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Table 4-79 Maximum Time to Normal for Gender

Maximum Time to Normal	Male	Female
A few minutes	134	14
Up to an hour	37	4
A few hours	23	6
More than a day	5	1

Table 4-80 Recovery Time for Gender

Recovery Time Count and Percent	Male			Female		
	True	False	N/A	True	False	N/A
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	126	36	42	16	2	7
	62%	18%	21%	64%	8%	28%

Table 4-81 Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again for Gender

Recovery Time Count and Percent	Male			Female		
	True	False	N/A	True	False	N/A
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	43	116	44	3	15	6
	21%	57%	22%	13%	63%	25%

Females were less likely to have been attacked or ambushed, experience an IED or other explosions, less likely have had experience with dead bodies, witnessed others get severely injured or killed, nor were they likely to have been responsible for a death. Though not significantly higher, they did report higher percentages for having been betrayed and having had feelings of powerlessness. They were not, however, significantly different than males for

classroom effects with the exception that males are more likely to have felt emotionally numb. They were not significantly different on any of the other scales.

Research Question 8: Informing Educators – What personal recommendations do combat veterans have for educators?

An open-ended question was provided to give participants an opportunity to write what they believe educators should be aware of and consider when they have combat experienced students in their classrooms. Though 3 officers provided N/A as their response, 121 officers provided one or more responses. Those responses trended into five groups:

1. The largest group explained that the combat experience effects depended on specific combat experiences, the branch of Service, and most importantly on individual differences.
2. The second group provided *things to keep in mind*, such as triggering situations and other things that cause the students frustration that should be avoided.
3. The third group related to stress from combat and their current stresses. It also addressed the meaning of their educational experiences.
4. The fourth group provided responses regarding assignments and other needs or recommendations.
5. The fifth group provided various positive combat experience effects.

It Depends

The largest group of responses provided multiple messages to remind educators that it depends on the individuals they have in their classroom. Many of those explained that there are different types of combat experiences and educators should consider how those types of experiences may impact the student. However, caution was provided regarding over-generalizing, discounting or minimizing anyone's experience, and that individuals experience events differently. Where some might consider an experience as trauma, another individual may cope with it seemingly unaffected. Several (18) participants pointed out that each person is different with statements such as; everyone handles their stress in a different way, there is a huge gap between what one person needs and what another needs, even people who have experienced the exact same traumatic event react differently, there is no one-size-fits-all solution, every soldier's experience is different and how they deal with it differs as well, everyone is different

and has to be treated on a case-by-case basis, everyone grieves differently and deals with pain differently, and everybody experiences the effects of war differently.

Stressors vary from person to person. One participant cautioned that “it must be reiterated that the student is still responsible for the coursework.” In the following passage, another student who participated in the research explained how important this is:

This understanding may provide the needed empathy towards those having difficulty adapting to the classroom environment and allow the educator to adjust their method of reaching these students. An understanding will also potentially assist in identifying class material that might present conflict with those who are affected by combat experiences. This doesn't mean that the material should be changed, but instead approached in a careful manner that minimizes potential issues.

Additional consideration should be given to the amount of time that has passed since the student's return from their combat experiences. Some participants in this study explained that if a student has recently returned, the educator should communicate with them to determine their needs. However, the passing of time seems to reduce the effects. One explained, “In the first few months after returning from a deployment loud noises were startling. However, over time I was able to resume my daily activities without those noises disturbing me.” Another explained, that when he first returned he had more difficulties but several years later his irritation with people in public had reduced to a normal level. And another stated, “I have had enough time to process a lot of my stress from my last deployment and I feel ready to learn in class.”

Things to Keep in Mind

Several participants explained that educators should keep in mind the types of classroom events or topics that may be triggering events for the combat experienced student. “After war, the threshold for frustration is lowered.” Four participants specifically mentioned that certain discussions regarding ethics, death, or the requirement to discuss past events can incite personal emotions. One participating student recommended avoiding discussions that involve traumatic experiences in combat (i.e. IEDs, casualties). Another said, “If anything could or should be understood, it is the topics that might trigger a flashback.” One explained that “there are minor

stimuli inside and outside the classroom that cause me to take a moment to sort out the memories and feelings they evoke.” Another explained that, “I do catch myself having to think of something else when we start to discuss soldiers and death and stories that relate to courage on the battle field.” According to another it depends on the subject, “In three months of class, I am doing very well, but did lose it one day when talking about dead bodies. I am very talkative/opinionated, but not that day.” The following passage explains how one student experienced triggering events:

As you are learning, whether it be reading or writing or participating in class or group environments, any thought or topic can trigger a reflection that will take you to a past scenario of your life you may wish to forget. It’s extremely hard to get past those constant interruptions in your train of thought so that you can continue to learn and move on. Sometimes the filing cabinet is just full of bad crap and it’s hard to squeeze the new stuff in.

Two participants explained that there are good days and bad days. One explained, “Some days I have the attitude that ... there is no need to get stressed because no one is going to die in a classroom environment. Other days my attitude is a really short temper and I get annoyed with everything.” And, another said, “Some days are good, and some days when the stress levels kick up, things get a little interesting. I have recognized my triggers and try to cease them when I feel them coming up.” “The ability to step out when flashbacks occur” is important. Others described the need as “Decompression time is crucial to the immediate situations” and “Sometimes it would be helpful to get the opportunity to walk out of class during a difficult subject.” Another participant said it is even more helpful when giving a break to tell them that a new direction will take place when they return and tell them the new topic. It will help divert the attention into a different direction. Another explained, “I believe a break is very helpful for Soldiers to clear emotions resonating from a previous experience. The traumatic event itself will weigh heavily as well as the Soldiers resiliency on how long it will take to recover and how easily thoughts will get triggered in the future.” And another student said, “Certain people have certain triggers” and educators should “ask ahead of time what they are.” Another student said, “Just don't laugh when I jump at loud noises. Other than that, I'm good to go!”

Eight participants explained that “flippant comments” or “people who comment about things and contexts with no experience...” are bothersome, and that educators should understand that “sometimes the tone in which they express their opinions can trigger hostility from the men and women who have fought the fights.” Another pointed out that “other students’ ignorance can set off combat veterans.” Another participant explained that educators should not overstate their respect or empathy, “I expect that as an adult educator you have the required expertise to teach me. I don't need to you to overstate the fact that you haven't experienced combat. That's ok, I didn't expect that you did.” One explained, “Occasionally people who have neither seen combat nor been forced to make decisions which led to the deaths of soldiers will say things that are completely ignorant.” But another pointed out that “glorification of what they have done in battle does not further the learning environment.”

Stress and Meaning

Some of the participants spoke about the stress their deployments caused them and their families increases the stress they have now that they have returned home. They expressed the need for more time to spend with their family and were frustrated when they attended a class that had little meaning to them. One explained, “When I was milliseconds away from death for a year, my time is valuable. It stresses me out when people waste my time and money in the classroom.” Another, “I get upset when I have to sit through a class that is quite clearly a waste of time...” And another advised, “I will tell you that fear tactics don’t work with combat vets. We have had more fear from really bad stuff... What is successful is explaining WHY things are important and leave it up to the leader to make their decision.” Like other adult learners, soldiers also seek meaning in what they are learning. One participant explained, “I get the ‘gist’ of things but do not fully understand the nuances of a subject because I am always looking to how this can apply to my job/soldiering/combat/leadership.” He/she went on to explain that, “what is important to me is the ‘so what’ of a subject and where can I find the directions of how to apply it again when needed later.” Another participants explained, “Educators need to understand what these experiences mean to Soldiers and how it may have changed how we view events.” “Since combat I look at challenges from a threat level, current threats are prioritized and addressed in sequence.”

One participant explained that his experiences during combat were related to the stress of responsibility more than his actual experiences. He/she explained, “The hyper-vigilance and constant stress of always being 'on', 7 days a week, are the aspects I had to cope with when coming home.” Another pointed out that “education is a stressor” and explained that “a focus on preparing and organizing for soldiers in academia will help limit the negative effects from stress.” Although another explained that, “No matter how much progress one has with medical assistance, the class environment contributes to regression and causes some more than others to re-live the nightmares they try to forget. Another explained. “I'll never experience the rush of adrenaline like combat again and sometimes classroom time/education seems a moot point.” And another explained, “I believe that expressing the overall value of an education on that individual is crucial to him/her remaining engaged and focused on learning vice wishing they were back in the field.”

Assignments

There were some participants who pointed out specific classroom needs. “Extra time to complete assignments would be great!” While several spoke about the need for more time to complete assignments and reading another spoke about the need for advance notice of the assignments and clear instructions for what is needed are also important. “After war, the threshold for frustration is lowered. When assignments are unclear or ambiguous, a student may be quick to anger in order to cope with the lack of clarity. Instructors should be clear and concise.” While one student explained that “it takes a little more time to digest the material and fully understand it,” another explained “how easily one becomes distracted or removed from a conversation.” Another stated, “I do think it (combat) has made it more difficult for me to concentrate and understand what I am reading.” And two officers explained their situation in similar ways. The following two comments reflect their confusion:

I cannot really explain it, but I'm definitely less disciplined than I used to be, which isn't really saying too much. It's often almost like I've developed ADD or am just plain unmotivated or undisciplined to do some things that hasn't always been the case.

and

I don't always process info as quickly now. I feel like my attention to surface details and getting things done quickly has made it harder for me to really critically think through things and come up with in depth answers. Almost like all the deployments made me think like someone with some type of ADD. Multitask, do things quickly and don't stay on a problem for long. It's a difficult adjustment to the higher-level learning environment with a very full schedule.

And another individual wrote about having learned a way for dealing with combat stress that is:

To essentially remove it from my mind and thoughts, unfortunately I think this lends its self as a bad rule when I enter the class room. I tend to wish learning away, even though I want to retain, I feel this can be overcome I just don't know how.

Five officers wrote that sharing their experiences helped them think through them, and they recommended that writing or classroom opportunities be provided to allow the ability to share experiences. An assignment that requires them to write about a "life changing event" provides a venue to "let us put on paper some of the things that we are feeling." They caution, however, that this may invoke deep feelings and an alternate assignment should be available if the individual isn't ready or is unable to write about their experiences.

One participant warns that:

Educators must be careful about stigmatizing those with traumatic combat experiences, either consciously or subconsciously. It's a delicate balancing act since the soldier-student may or may not be aware of how combat affected him/her, but he/she is acutely aware if there is any sense of being treated differently.

The following three statements provide further advice for educators:

1. Please be aware of the behavioral / physical signs of one of your students who may be suffering some stress from a prior experience. At the root of their being, they are

dedicated individuals who want to do the best that they can and complete the assignments / participate in class. A subtle (key because they do not want to stand out) reminder that they are in a safe environment can go a long way.

2. Don't treat them like kids. You may have to develop a couple of methods to explain the topic, but go slow and take your time. Expect to be challenged. You may have the book answer, but the veteran will bring you ways to solve the problem(s) you present in class you may not like, but the veteran is about results not ways.
3. Veteran students are not victims of their experience; they simply have a wealth of experience that is uncommon among the general population... Ultimately, the student is no different than any other student, just has a different experience. Do not treat them as if they are special, this only leads to problems down the road. Be clear in expectations and hold them accountable. Any military student understands these principles and will adhere to them.

Positive Responses

Because the survey sought primarily for the effects of combat experience on students, the majority of participants in this study brought forward the difficulties they experienced as a result of their combat experiences. It is important to consider, however, that several officers spoke of the positive outcomes from their combat experiences and some did not feel their combat experiences had any influence on their classroom experiences or learning. They explained how combat experiences teach one the value of life (in general) and specifically the value of time. They provided comments such as, "I have benefitted from my operational experience from my combat tours," "How I see the world now drives me to be the best I can for those soldiers that deserve good leaders that don't get them killed," "some things from combat change me for the better and made me a better person," "my combat experience provides positive interactions vice

negative impacts to the classroom and my life,” “my combat experiences have improved my capability to understand and apply what I am learning, it’s an experience like any other; it has good and bad parts, it has given me a better perspective on life and war.” “I view my experience as a positive experience in that I see things non-combat experienced people do not see, and my experiences individually and collectively have shaped me in a positive way.” “I think I have had to force myself to believe that I am better off having learned from these events rather than taking the viewpoint that, I suffered through them.”

One recommendation provided for the survey’s future use is to add positive effects rather than focus purely on the negative impacts of their combat experiences. Another consideration might be to explore the positive effects of the classroom learning environment on the combat experienced soldier. As one stated,

Overall classes keep me focused and not thinking about combat experiences. I enjoy learning something new and the work involved in that. It is those quiet times, alone, that combat experiences come back and may be difficult to deal with, but they have no effect on me personally in the classroom.

Overall, the feedback provided sought to remind educators to consider each individual uniquely and learn what their needs are. Educators were encouraged to be respectful of their service without glorifying it or being overly apologetic. They were asked to recognize that these combat experienced veterans may have some days that are worse than others requiring patience and understanding. Help them bridge the lessons with meaning and importance by explaining why it is important. Consider creative assignments that might increase their memory and ability to engage in them and complete them. Realize they may have more difficulties concentrating and remembering information. Don’t treat them like kids or victims but be aware that some of them may have reactions in class that are beyond their control.

Summary

Chapter four presented the results of the study. It included statistical analyses of the quantitative data. Analyses of the overall survey instrument and each individual scale set using Cronbach’s Alpha indicated the internal consistency was sufficient to determine the survey as reliable for this research. Survey invitations sent to 990 Command and General Staff Officer’s

School yielded 235 valid response cases. The response rate of 24 percent provided a high level of confidence and was sufficient to maintain sampling error rates at acceptable levels. Analyses of the quantitative data revealed many types of combat experiences these students endured and the affects those experiences had on their classroom participation, assignments, reading, memory, and overall effects. Kruskal-Wallis Tests revealed significant differences among collected demographics. Additionally, the amount of recovery time needed to recover from triggering events provided important findings. The results of this study offers information pertinent both to the Command and General Staff College and other adult education community in which combat experienced veterans participate in the learning environment.

Chapter five provides additional analysis of the quantitative data and implications. Recommendations are provided for the CGSC leadership and civilian adult learning environments as well as recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5 - Conclusions and Recommendations

They killed him. He made it back from the mission, and back to the FOB, and then back home, and was finally safe. But he wasn't. None of us are. They can still kill us anytime.

Castner, 2012, p.207

The Global War on Terror (GWOT) may have become a terror itself to the men and women who fought in each of its campaigns. While some individuals have either Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) experience and others have Operational Enduring Freedom (OEF) experience, most of these combat veterans have both. And, though there are individuals who experienced only one or two deployments, there are many who have endured eight or more deployments into combat zones. According to Schiraldi (2000), the primary cause of PTSD is experiencing a stressful event. "It is estimated that 40 percent of Americans have experienced at least one major trauma" (Schiraldi, 2000, p. 36). Most of these traumas are the witnessing of a trauma. The GWOT soldiers, airmen, and sailors have experienced and witnessed multiple traumas.

This war brought with it complexities unknown to prior battles (RAND, 2008). This was the first protracted war using an all-volunteer force. This war activated more Reserve and National Guard members to serve in overseas campaigns than any other. Fighting in two countries forced the sharing of equipment, supplies, and manpower that would inevitably prove exhausting to both locations. The enemy was as undefined as the war purpose itself (Hoge, 2010). Many soldiers were being shot at and attacked while simultaneously being ordered not to return fire. For more than ten years these men and women lived in tents pouring sand from their boots before having a cold shower.

Returning home presented its own dilemmas. These warriors experienced multiple traumas and now carry a secret story inside that can never truly be shared. The what-ifs and should-haves will forever haunt them. Yet we, those of us fortunate to have not fought for this country's freedom, expect them to return to the daily life as if none of it affects them. This is too much to ask. It does and will affect them for a long time to come.

This research sought to shed light on how these effects appear in the classroom. The purpose of this research was to learn from military war veteran students how their combat

experience affects them as they strive to continue their education. The primary research question was “ In what ways does Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) combat experience affect combat veteran students while participating in an adult learning environment?” This question was answered through multiple secondary questions to help us understand their experiences, the classroom effects, how it affects their assignments, reading, and memory and how they are overall changed by their combat experiences.

Discussion

Research Question 1: What specific combat experiences do combat veteran students have?

The most difficult experience for me was witnessing and caring for the children who were mangled. Anonymous

Learning about the effects of combat requires an understanding of the types of combat these men and women experienced. This study explored sixteen types of combat experiences. Some of these specific combat experiences were developed from combining the results reported by Hoge (2010) and the results found in the RAND (2008) study. RAND used a list of traumatic combat experiences adapted from a study conducted by Hoge et al. in 2003 and reported in an article, “Combat Duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, Mental Health Problems, and Barriers to Care” appearing in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 2004 and again in *The Army Medical Department Journal* in 2008. Hoge (2010) later published *Once a Warrior Always a Warrior; Navigating the Transition from Combat to Home Including Combat Stress, PTSD, and mTBI*. He used the earlier results to provide a guide for soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Hoge et al. (2004) studied the effects of combat on the mental health of Soldiers and Marines who had deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Hoge et al. study began in 2003, early in the GWOT. They found a strong relation between combat experiences and the prevalence of PTSD. They also found that the percentage of soldiers who met the screening criteria for major depression, PTSD, or alcohol misuse was higher after deployment than before deployment, particularly for PTSD (Hoge et al., 2008).

The RAND (2008) study collected data in 2007; four years after the Hoge et al study, and published a report titled *Invisible Wounds of War*. The RAND study used many of the same

combat experiences for their data and focused on three major conditions; PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and major depressive disorder and depressive symptoms. “Unlike the physical wounds of war that maim or disfigure, these conditions remain invisible to other servicemembers, to family members, and to society in general” (RAND, 2008, p. xx). The RAND study sought to determine the prevalence of mental health and cognitive conditions among troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. They found the rates of all three major conditions studied were high compared to the general U.S. civilian population. They determined that “about one-third of those previously deployed have at least one of these three conditions, and about 5 percent report symptoms of all three” (p. xxi).

This study sought to determine if the students in the Command and General Staff Officers Course had the same or similar experiences used in these studies. Though this study did not seek to determine the mental health of participants, it did seek to determine how their experiences impact their participation in adult learning. Students suffering the symptoms of PTSD, major depression, or TBI may have greater challenges succeeding in the adult education than other students. Unlike average students, combat experienced students may have been placed in situations in which they had to kill or be killed. Many of them were responsible for or witnessed the deaths of combatants and many witnessed their comrades become casualties of war. Some may have had their friends die in their arms or were responsible for picking the pieces of those blown apart by explosions.

Shay (2002) explains that “veterans carry the weight of friends’ deaths in war and after war, and the weight of all those irretrievable losses among the living that, like the dead, can never be brought back” (p. 76). More than half of respondents in this study (128) reported they witnessed a friend become a casualty; twenty six reported witnessing this several times. These warriors may now see themselves as toxic because they believe if they share their knowledge of the hideousness of war they will harm others. “These veterans shun closeness with others, because they are certain that others will be harmed by the contact” (Shay, 2002, p. 83).

Brookfield (2005) reminds us that, “inseparable from participation is the notion of efficacy—the sense that one’s participation matters, that it is having an impact on others” (p. 10). If these warriors now see themselves as toxic or harmful, they are not likely to consider their participation as beneficial to anyone. And though “what is essential is that everyone finds ways to contribute to others’ understanding” (Brookfield, 2005, p. 10), combat experienced students

may have difficulty contributing. Educators may find themselves struggling to engage them in classroom discussions.

Another area of challenge for combat experienced students relates to the consequences of long-term stress. Hearing and feeling explosions on a daily basis can increase the fear and stress of soldiers living in a combat zone. As Sapolsky (2004) pointed out, “A stressor can also be the anticipation of that happening” (p. 6). Soldiers who witnessed multiple traumas see things coming and anticipate them. This can turn on a stress-response as strong as if the event had actually occurred. It can cause the heart to race or hands to shake even though nothing has happened. Thus, the stress-response can be activated simply by thinking about and expecting a physical or psychological insult. Hearing explosions several times during a combat assignment and seeing dead bodies several times as well could increase the anticipation and fear of being hit by an explosion and becoming one of those dead bodies seen by 78 percent of students in this study. This can increase the body’s stress-response even when no trauma has actually occurred. Individuals having these experiences and even those who vicariously experienced these combat experiences have lingering impacts on their functioning that could have direct effects on combat veterans participating in classroom activities and assignments (RAND, 2008, p. 92).

It is important to note that the RAND (2008) study was conducted between April 2007 and January of 2008. Roughly six years had passed since the beginning of the GWOT in October of 2001. Though many of the men and women sampled in the RAND (2008) study had deployed more than once, today’s researcher is hard pressed to find any GWOT veterans without multiple deployments. By October 2013, when this study was conducted, few GWOT veterans without multiple deployments or without experience in both OIF and OEF campaigns were found among military officers. One participant reported eight deployments over the last twelve years. Many Reserve and National Guard members had their lives further complicated with being separated from the military upon their return. This left them without the support of their comrades to re-enter the civilian workforce during a time of recession and high unemployment. Their sources of stress were compounded with issues relating not only to their combat experiences but also to their careers, homes, families, and marriages. Shea (2010) found students had multiple overlapping stresses that were noticeable by the faculty in the classroom. The Command and General Staff College faculty recognized the stress and that “it was occurring in their classroom” (p. 150). They acknowledged “it was their job to mitigate or eliminate it, if possible” (p. 150).

Trust and respect are also important to classroom participation (Brookfield & Preskill, 2005, Shor, 1992; Brookfield, 1990; Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Dewey, 1938). “War destroys social order of the mind. Combat trauma destroys the capacity for social trust” (Shay, 2003, p. 33). Fifty seven of the 235 participants in this study felt betrayed by someone in their unit and one was sexually assaulted though it is not clear if it was by someone in their unit. That individual had a combination of fourteen of the sixteen combat experience types. No females reported sexual assault. Schiraldi (2000) explains that intentional human traumas are usually the worst to recover from. The PTSD symptoms from them are “usually more complex, are of longer duration, and are more difficult to treat” (p. 7). One of the students in this study experienced two episodes (one Iraqi and one Afghani) in which the forces they were training “sold us out, ambushed us and attacked us from within our compounds.” Another witnessed the Marez chow hall suicide bomber who walked in during the lunch rush as he did many times before only on that day he blew himself up injuring and killing several people. Combat experienced students who experienced betrayals and violations of their trust may have difficulty regaining the trust needed to participate in classroom discussions with other students. Educators may have to provide multiple opportunities to prove trust is safe before these students are to fully engage in the classroom. “Restoration of trustworthy community to the survivor will have healthy biological effects, of comparable or greater magnitude than successful medication” (Shay, 2003, p. 186).

Combat veterans are unique students in the adult learning community who have a myriad of experiences and unhealed emotional wounds. Experiencing even one trauma during combat can lead to long-term effects. The RAND (2008) study found that “an individual who experienced five of the listed traumas is at more than 4 times the risk for both PTSD and depression relative to someone who experienced none of these traumas but who is otherwise similar in age, gender, rank, ethnicity, branch or Service, deployment length, etc.” (p. 101). This study found that ninety five percent of all participants had at least one combat experience type. Without including the combat traumas provided in the open-ended responses, 86 percent of the students in this study had experienced five or more combat traumas. Thirty nine percent had a combination of more than half of the sixteen combat experience types presented in this study. Seven officers had thirteen, four officers had a combination of fourteen experiences, and one individual had fifteen of the sixteen combat experience types. Vaterling et al. (2010) also found

that higher levels of stress during deployment resulted in greater increases in PTSD symptom severity after deployment. The results of this study demonstrate how the implications found in the RAND (2008) study have compounded through the continuation of the GWOT.

Schiraldi (2000) explained the diagnostic criteria for PTSD as including the experience, witnessing, or learning of events that involved or threatened death, serious injury, or violation of the body of self or others and also includes the person's response as involving intense fear, helplessness or horror. Though this research did not seek to determine if participants had symptoms of PTSD, it did seek to explore the feelings of being powerless and if the individual believed they would survive combat or themselves become a casualty. "Penetrating our 'safety zone,' traumatic events expose our mortality and serve as a permanent reminder that feelings of personal safety from moment to moment are not guaranteed" (West, 2009, p. 71). Half of the respondents (113) in this study reported that there were times during their combat deployment when they felt powerless. Thirty six officers were personally wounded/ injured in combat and eighty five officers (36 percent) thought they would never survive. The RAND (2008) team noted that having PTSD, depression, or TBI is likely to affect obtaining future educational goals. "Specifically, there is compelling evidence indicating that these conditions will affect service members' return to employment, their productivity at work, and their future job prospects, as indicated by impeded educational attainment" (RAND, 2008, p.140). This study found high quantities of combat experiences such as those in the RAND (2008) study.

In summary, due to the duration of the GWOT, countless combat experienced veterans will continue to endure the impact of their experiences as they transition into post-war life. "The reality of war is that everyone gets wounded. Some wounds heal rapidly, but some last for a lifetime. Some wounds can be seen. Some wounds are invisible... inside the heart, soul and spirit of the Warrior" (Dees, 2007, p. 5). "Left untreated, war-related stress can lead to a number of negative outcomes ranging from poor concentration, hypervigilance and chronic anger, to domestic violence, substance abuse, incarceration, and morality" (Whealin et al., 2008, p. ix). "Everyone's military experience is different, and every soldier doesn't have PTSD, but war is a life-changing experience and everyone has a story. And the very least we can do is listen" (Tine, 2009, p. 254). This study sought to learn about these life-changing experiences and how they affect combat experienced veterans while participating in adult learning.

Research Question 2: What effects do combat veteran students report having?

*My mind will block out information when I get stressed. I
can't stop forgetting.* *A participant in this study*

Classroom Effects

Because the purpose of this research was not to determine if participants have PTSD symptoms but instead sought to determine classroom experiences as a result of combat experiences some of the questions found in the Hoge et al. (2004) and RAND (2008) studies were modified to put them into the classroom context. Some questions used in the Hoge et al. (2004) and RAND (2008) studies were the same or similar to questions found in the Combat Exposure Scale (Keane, 1989), The Mississippi Scale Military Version (Keane, 1988), and the Deployment Risk and Resilience inventory (King, 2003). Select questions from these were used and modified for this study to determine classroom specific experiences. These questions addressed issues discussed by Shay (2003) regarding trust, themes and betrayal also discussed by (van der Kolk, et al., 2007). Difficulties regarding concentration, memory, distancing, and anxiety (van der Kolk et al., 2007; Vasterling & Brewin, 2005; Whealin et al., 2008) were questioned. Lingering physical effects of prolonged stress from combat experience were also explored (Sapolsky, 2004; Bremner, 2002; van der Kolk et al., 2007).

The first guideline Wlodkowski (1999) defined as necessary for adult education is that “we create a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment” (p. 60). He stressed a respect for diversity that understands that people are different. These differences result from their history, socialization, experience, and biology. In such a safe learning environment there is “little risk of learners suffering...” (p. 60). The learners know their sharing of ideas is sincerely respected which allows them to be more connected and open to exposing their thinking. This study revealed, however, that 33 percent of the students in this study felt distant or cut off from classmates. Schiraldi (2000) explained that “people with PTSD commonly feel detached or estranged from others” (p. 10). He also explained that irritability and outbursts of anger may occur as heated arguments, screaming, intense criticizing, or impatience. This study revealed that 57 percent of participants felt irritable and 25 percent of participants got angry about what happened during their combat experiences. Taylor et al. (2011) found that 47 percent of their study participants had outbursts of anger. This unresolved anger is fatiguing (Schiraldi, 2000;

Whealin et al., 2008; Driscoll & Straus, 2009; Vasterling & Brewin, 2005; Arbanas, 2010). One participant in this study explained to educators that “flippant comments” or “people who comment about things and contexts with no experience...” are also bothersome.

Though many combat experienced students may not have PTSD “many of the signs of PTSD can be construed for what military stress teams now call Combat Operational Stress (COS). It has been determined that every participant in a war zone will manifest some aspects of COS (i.e. hyper-alertness, anxiety, frustration, anger, confusion, intolerance of ‘stupid’ behavior, sleep disruption, etc.)” (Cantrell & Dean, 2007, p. 8). Many of the GWOT soldiers, airmen, and sailors will walk into the adult learning environment with these manifestations. It is important for educators to be aware of this possibility and not over or under-react to it. Creating a learning environment that is safe and respectful will help alleviate these challenges.

Duke (1977) explained that “before students will learn, they must feel good about their learning environment” (p. 268). This study revealed that 28 percent of students who participated in this study had disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class and 30 percent were easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience. Thirty six percent of participants felt emotionally numb, 30 percent were uncomfortable when in class, and 21 percent reported being tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by their combat experiences. “Because the intrusive thoughts and accompanying arousal are so unpleasant, people with PTSD desperately try to avoid all reminders of the trauma” (Schiraldi, 2000, P. 9). Distancing is a common technique used to reduce the possibility of experiencing an event that may cause memories or physical reactions (van der Kolk et al., 2007; Vasterling & Brewin, 2005; Sapolsky, 2004). Thirty two percent of participants in this study experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience and 9 percent of the participants in this study avoided classroom activities and situations because they reminded them of a stressful combat experience.

Goodman (1995) stated, “It is important to create a safe environment where students can listen to new information and points of view, as well as share their own questions. Students need to feel that they will not be attacked or ridiculed by other students--or the teacher” (p. 47). Yet, 13 percent of these students were still on alert for combat when in class and 45 percent said classroom discussions angered them. One student stated that educators should understand that “sometimes the tone in which they express their opinions can trigger hostility from the men and women who have fought the fights.” Another pointed out that “other students’ ignorance can set

off combat veterans.” One explained, “Occasionally people who have neither seen combat nor been forced to make decisions which led to the deaths of Soldiers will say things that are completely ignorant.”

Even when classrooms are respectful, safe, and inclusive combat veteran students may have difficulty relaxing and engaging or staying engaged in classroom activities particularly when so many of them are still on alert for combat and are easily startled during class. Seventeen percent of students in this study had something trigger them that made them feel as if a stressful combat experience was happening again (as if reliving it). While some triggers may be easy to pinpoint such as playing military videos or talking about war situations, other triggers may not be easy to determine. They can be as simple as the trash on the side of the road seen while driving to class or the slow cooker that appears at a social potluck. One in four of the students in this study (25 percent) had physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminded them of a stressful combat experience and 42 percent of them had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn’t work, an earlier argument).

Castner (2012) described a triggering event while he was standing in the airport awaiting his flight. Suddenly other passengers became potential enemies, a briefcase became a bomb, and a young football player and his father became the enemy barriers blocking his escape. He was triggered though anyone else would have seen nothing unusual. It was, however, the anniversary of his return home which is a date that brings back difficulties each year since his return. The unfortunate reality is that it is impossible to determine everything that might trigger a combat veteran. Therefore, it is even more important that we know the veterans who are in the classroom and what their unique needs are.

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Though I know what to do, I can’t seem to do it.
(29 percent of participants)

Additional to feeling uncomfortable in class, being irritable, and easily startled while in class, 58 percent of the participants in this study had difficulty even remembering what was taught in class. Nearly all (85 percent) of them had to read information more than once to remember what was read and 60 percent seemed to drift away while reading. They had difficulty

starting assignments (39 percent), felt anxiety when working on assignments (36 percent), had trouble concentrating on assignments (47 percent), remembering when assignments were due (42 percent), and 32 percent had difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment. Schiraldi (2000) explains that “It is difficult to concentrate and remember when one is still battling for control of intrusive memories” (p. 8). Nearly half of the students in this study (43 percent) caught themselves thinking about their combat experiences while working on assignments and 44 percent admittedly allowed distractions to interfere with completing assignments.

Twenty two percent reported that their combat experiences changed how well they accomplished assignments and they negatively affected their ability to remember what they read (23 percent). One student explained, “I am suffering from short term memory loss and sometimes I enter class and for a moment I don’t know where I am” and another said, “Personally dealing with memory issues brought on by concussions.” One individual wrote, “Not sure if my memory trouble is tied to my combat experience, but my memory and ability to concentrate seems to have changed since 2004 (first deployment).” And, another explained this his difficulty in the following passage:

I cannot really explain it, but I'm definitely less disciplined then I used to be, which isn't really saying too much. It's often almost like I've developed ADD or am just plain unmotivated or undisciplined to do some things that hasn't always been the case.

Another student explained “I tend to wish learning away, even though I want to retain. I feel this can be overcome, I just don’t know how.” Most PTSD symptoms persist for at least one month and are considered acute if the diagnosis is resolved within three months (Schiraldi, 2000; van der Kolk et al., 2007; Vasterling & Brewin, 2009; Whealin et al., 2008; Williams & Poijula, 2002; Sapolsky, 2004). If the diagnosis persists beyond three months it is considered chronic. If the symptoms don’t appear until at least six months after the trauma it is considered delayed. “It has been observed that a large percentage of PTSD cases improve considerably within three months” (Schiraldi, 2000, p. 11). Though time heals, the combat veterans of the Global War on Terror experienced the longest protracted war in American history. Re-exposure was common, along with multiple traumas. “Though I know what to do, I can’t seem to do it” was a true statement for 29 percent of these combat experienced students.

Overall Effects

There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it. (23 percent of participants)

The majority (74 percent) of participants in this study has changed the way they view the world and 72 percent believed they are a different person than they were prior to combat. Many (52 percent) believed their deployments increased their stress levels and 32 percent believed their deployments changed the way they learn. Thirty two percent of the students in this study experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience and 25 percent got angry about what happened during their combat experiences. Eleven percent believed their combat experiences interfered with their participation in education, 17 percent couldn't relax, and 6 percent had difficulty moving on with their life. Nearly one in four of them (23 percent) marked true for "there are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it."

Some of the students found it difficult to concentrate during lectures or when someone was speaking directly at them. Small sounds could be just as annoying as loud ones. Relating to others who had not been through combat could be challenging and sometimes classroom discussions reminded them what they went through. One individual wrote that he "can't stop forgetting."

Though there were multiple negative effects, it is also important to acknowledge that many of them felt positive outcomes. One student explained that "combat experience has me wanting to do my absolute best in all my work." He went on to explain that "any slacking in work means I may slack or cut corners in my work which can result in a soldier dying because of my mistake." One student explained that, "Though I occasionally forget things, I have developed habits for documentation and review that prevent me from ultimately missing anything important." Many combat veterans develop various coping skills to help with the effects of their combat experiences. Thus, this research also sought to learn from them what coping activities are practiced.

Research Question 3: What types of coping activities are practiced or needed by combat veteran students?

Remember that it happened in the past and that I have done what I can to prevent it from happening again. Anonymous

Forty of the 94 students who provided open descriptions of their coping skills wrote about the ability to take a break and remove themselves from situations that caused them to have emotional or physical reactions. Some took a walk or tried to think about other things such as their family or children, and reminded themselves that they are safe. Seven specifically mentioned isolating themselves. “Avoidance is the hallmark of anxiety” (Schiraldi, 2000, p. 13). Nineteen of the 94 students used some form of rational thinking such as “remind myself I’m home and I’m OK.” Some students explained that music, reading, playing with their kids, or taking a nap helped them clear their mind. Physical activities were reported as helpful for sixteen of the 94 participants such as running, cycling, and swimming. One said he or she would “try to find something to make me laugh.” A couple of students used breathing techniques or counting and tapping to reduce their anxiety and a couple of them enjoyed an alcohol drink.

“Stress can wreak havoc with your metabolism, raise your blood pressure, burst your white blood cells, make you flatulent, ruin your sex life, and if that’s not enough, possibly damage your brain” (Sapolsky, 2004, p. 384). The long term damage caused by years of combat stress can require years to recover from (Schiraldi, 2000; Vaterling et al., 2010; McEwen & Lasley, 2002; Sapolsky, 2004; Whealin et al., 2008; Bremnar, 2002; Grossman & Christensen, 2008). For most, coping skills are needed during that recovery process. For many, though, these coping skills will be needed for the rest of their lives at one degree or another. “One thing that is utterly reliable is that the amount of variability increases with age” (p. 385). The officers who responded to this study developed multiple coping skills. The immediate coping skill most mentioned was taking a break and removing themselves from the stressing situation. Removing the stressor can reduce the anxiety and flood of emotions and physical reactions to the stressor.

Coping skills have the capacity to become long-term coping mechanisms. Physical exercises such as running, cycling, and swimming counter stress for a number of reasons. Having the facilities for exercising on campus can be beneficial for combat experienced students. Another coping skill mentioned by participants was meditation. Sapolsky (2004) explained that

when meditation is done on a regular basis it “seems to be pretty good for your health, decreasing glucocorticoid levels, sympathetic tone, and all the bad stuff that too much of either can cause” (p. 402). Talking with family or others with similar experiences provides social support. (Hoge, 2010; Shay, 2003; Sapolsky, 2004). However, Sapolsky (2004) cautions that social support be sought “from the right person, the right network of friends, the right community” (p. 407). He explains that providing social support can also be stress-reducing. Coping can be achieved in many ways. “Regardless of your most natural coping style, a key point is that different styles tend to work better in different circumstances” (Sapolsky, 2004, p. 408).

The question comes back to how educators can aid in their students’ coping. Though educators cannot possibly predict everything that might potentially trigger a soldier, they do have control over certain activities that may reduce triggers and provide a safe environment in which coping skills are rarely needed. The key remains in communicating and knowing the students personally.

Research Question 4: How much time is required to return to normal functioning when a triggering event is experienced?

While it is important to learn about the potential triggers combat experienced students might experience in the classroom and their coping skills for mitigating their responses to triggers, it is also important to understand how long a triggering event can affect a student. Though many (66 percent) of the students in this study reported it only took a few minutes to return to normal when something happened that caused them to have physical or emotional difficulties, 18 of them needed an hour, 13 needed a few hours, and 3 needed more than a day to return to normal. Many (62 percent) believed the amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger and, 20 percent marked true for “sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.”

Several officers needed to remove themselves or even isolate themselves from stressors. Some spoke specifically about changing their thinking, finding something to make them laugh or distract them from the thoughts that are troubling them. While this may be an effective coping skill for many situations and people; for some it may be a sign of the dissociation of traumatic memories. Dissociation allows a person to escape the distressing experience. Schiraldi (2000) explains how we can temporarily escape our traumatic memories by separating them rather than

keeping them smoothly connected to our other memories. He cautions, however, that “while the memory may be walled off for a while, it is not filed in long-term memory. Instead of taking its place alongside other memories on file, the traumatic memory remains ‘on the desktop’ where it repeatedly intrudes upon awareness and cannot, it seems, be put away for long” (p. 14).

Traumatic memories include all five of our body’s senses. A trigger may be related to any of those senses when you see, hear, smell, taste, or feel something that reminds you of that traumatic moment. Triggers can also be brought on by a significant date such as the anniversary of the traumatic event or by activities such as driving that were being performed when the trauma occurred. It can also be pain or the touch of a person grabbing your shoulder, blocking your passage, or you find yourself in a situation that is similar to the trauma experience. Other situations can be stressful such as being in or witnessing a fight. Some situations can even be witnessed on television and cause a trigger reaction such as a soldier watching a war movie might be triggered by a particular scene. Strong emotions of loneliness, sadness, rejection, criticism, or even the realization that you are feeling happy can cause a person to slip back into the past.

Survivors try to forget about traumatic events. They rationalize them and simply try not to think about them. They might avoid people, places, or things that invite these memories to surface. They convince themselves they have gotten over it and have moved on and dissociate from anything connected to the past. One of the indications of dissociation provided by Shiraldi (2000) is when a person “feels like an observer of the present situation, rather than a participant” (p. 24). Twenty three percent of the students in this study marked true for “there are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.” Triggers can happen at any time regardless of mood or happiness or location. Memories that have been walled off inevitably break through the wall in flashbacks. Flashbacks can contain several memories all at once.

Twenty one percent of the participants in this study marked true for “Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.” Again, the purpose of this study was not to determine if participants have PTSD. We can infer that some do. However, the questions regarding the amount of time students may need to recover sought to bring awareness to educators that sometimes a student may need more than a break to fully function again. It is important to note that a large percentage of PTSD cases typically improve within three months of the onset though

some individuals may have delayed onset, usually within six months after the stressor (Schiraldi, 2000; Whealin et al. 2008, van der Kok et al., 2007; Vasterling & Brewin, 2009). However, most PTSD cases studied are singular traumas vice years of ongoing combat and re-exposure to traumas or multiple traumas. Combat experienced students with PTSD may require years before symptoms improve.

Research Question 5: Are there differences between Services?

Differences between Service branches

RAND (2008) determined that some specific groups—Reserve Components and those who have left military service—may be at higher risk of suffering PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), and major depressive disorder and depressive symptoms. Consistent with RAND (2008), the Army participants in this study experienced higher incidents of combat experiences particularly having seen others severely injured or killed. They were also more likely to have seen dead bodies or human remains and to have smelled decomposing bodies. They experienced more explosions, attacks or were ambushed and experienced more IED explosions. They were also more likely to have experienced times when they felt powerless. However, no significant differences were found in Classroom Effects. More Army officers had difficulty starting assignments and concentrating on assignments and drifted away while reading assignments. They had to read information more than once to remember what was read. Overall, Army officers were more likely to report having experienced flashbacks and they believed combat changed the way they view the world. Army officers were more likely to have felt like a different person than prior to combat and believed combat experience changed the way they learn. They were also more likely to mark true for “there are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.”

Army officers were also more likely to mark true for the amount of time it took to return to normal when something has caused physical or emotional difficulties depends on the trigger and that sometimes they felt like they will never be normal again. One student expressed, “What is normal? This is the new normal.” Comparisons are shown in tables 4-8 through 4-19 in chapter four of this study.

Differences between Service Components

When comparing officers serving in Active Components as compared to the Reserve and National Guard Components, Active Components officers were more likely to have witnessed a friend become a casualty. They were also more likely to have handled or uncovered human remains. However, the Reserve and National Guard officers were more likely to have had difficulty starting assignments, and mark true for “though I know what to do, I can’t seem to do it.” Reserve and National Guard officers had more difficulty relaxing and had more difficulty moving on with their life. The RAND (2008) pointed out that “higher rates of PTSD are found for servicemembers who are not on active duty— i.e., those in the National Guard or Reserve, as well as those who have left the military” (p. 98). Similar patterns were shown for depression as well. Comparisons are shown in tables 4-20 through 4-31 in chapter four of this study.

The Reserve and National Guard members have added stresses and less support both when they serve actively in combat and when they return to their civilian homes. In peace time these military members typically serve one weekend per month and two weeks out of the year. They are less trained, less experienced, and less prepared to engage in battle. They often find themselves surrounded by active duty members who do not necessarily treat them as part of the group and their military positions are more vulnerable. They don’t know where they will go when their deployment ends (to another active duty assignment or back to civilian life) and they don’t know what support they will have.

When active duty members return from deployment they rejoin their family and accept a new assignment. Their spouses and children are accustomed to the life style of moving every few years and are more able to adapt to the requirements. Many Reserve and National Guard members returned to find their spouses didn’t adapt well and may have even filed for divorce. Once out of active duty they may find returning to their prior jobs is not as easy as anticipated. They may have difficulty finding a support system to share their trauma experiences and may not even have a veteran’s facility in their area. Many of these men and women may find themselves abandoned by everything they had before they deployed and devoid of all camaraderie they had while deployed. They now find themselves very much alone. Thus, though they may not have had the same types of combat exposure, their added stressors can certainly inhibit their ability to thrive in any combat situation. These added stressors further compound the stress of engaging in adult learning making it difficult for them to concentrate and succeed in their learning. An

educator's awareness of these complications can provide one area of social support these students might not otherwise have. Communicating and learning more about their special circumstances may provide insight for the educator in meeting their learning needs.

Research Question 6: Are there differences between combat deployments?

Differences between OEF and OIF

The GWOT spanned over 10 years with campaigns in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), and came to an end with Operation New Dawn (OND). Due to the longevity of these campaigns and the sharing of resources in support of them, most combat veterans have experience in both OEF and OIF while some have OND experience. Thus, comparisons between OEF and OIF are limited in the number of officers who have only one or the other and not both. This study compared 26 officers with OEF experience to 78 officers with only OIF experience and 129 officers who had both OEF and OIF experience. The remaining officers had only OND experience (2 officers). In addition to supporting these campaigns several, officers listed other deployments they experienced in which they engaged in combat.

The results of this study suggest that officers who were in combat for Operational Iraqi Freedom (OIF) had higher exposure to certain combat experiences. They were more likely to have handled or uncovered human remains and smelled decomposing bodies. They were more likely to have experienced nearby explosions and specifically IED explosions. They were more likely to have been attacked or ambushed, witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners, or were wounded/injured in combat. These OIF experienced warriors were also more likely to have felt powerless during their deployments and thought they would never survive. These findings are similar to those of the Hoge et al. study conducted in 2003 in which they found that “differences in the prevalence according to location were largely a function of the greater frequency and intensity of combat in Iraq” (Hoge et al., 2008, p. 12). RAND (2008) found that “when comparisons are available, servicemembers deployed to Iraq appear to be at higher risk for PTSD than servicemembers deployed to Afghanistan.”

Unlike OIF operations, the OEF operations initially included a strong use of targeted air strikes and used only a small number of Special Operations Forces on the ground (RAND, 2008). Due to the Taliban's lack of airpower, the war against them lasted only about two and a half months. The U.S. ground forces then turned toward stability operations. The casualties were less

than those in OIF. OIF operations involved a greater number of ground troops focused on security forces and stabilizing. The IED became the weapon of choice in Iraq. As the fighting continued the IEDs evolved from crude devices detonated by simple mechanisms to “increasingly sophisticated weapons triggered by cell phones, infrared signals, or pressure plates” (RAND, 2008, p. 26). They were devastatingly effective against U.S. forces (RAND, 2008). Thus, higher incidents of IEDs and explosions are anticipated from officers who served in OIF along with resulting higher numbers of officers wounded/injured.

The RAND 2008 study found that “when comparisons are available, servicemembers deployed to Iraq appear to be at higher risk for PTSD than servicemembers deployed to Afghanistan” (RAND, 2008, p. 53). They were also at higher risk for major depression and TBI. Thus, higher resulting effects in the learning environment might be anticipated. This study found that officers with OIF experience were more uncomfortable in class and had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn’t work, an earlier argument). Though the differences weren’t significant in all fourteen classroom effects the OIF officers had higher percentiles than OEF officers in all fourteen classroom effects. The same is true for all fourteen scale items for assignments, reading, and memory. Significant differences were found in feeling anxiety when working on assignments, having to read information more than once to remember what was read, and having difficulty remembering what was taught in class. These memory difficulties may be the result of a traumatic brain injury (TBI). With higher numbers of IEDs reported by OIF officers, these officers are also likely to have higher incidences of TBI possibly resulting in greater memory difficulties. Patients with mild TBI/PTSD, seen by Petska and MacLennan (2009), “ranked memory difficulties as one of their greatest concerns, often on par with PTSD/trauma-related symptoms (including depression)” (p. 61). OIF officers were also more likely to report “Though I know what to do, I can’t seem to do it.”

The Overall Effects scale consisted of ten items. OIF officers had higher percentiles for nine of those ten items with significant differences for combat changing the way they view the world. OIF officers were also significantly different than OEF officers in their results regarding the amount of time it takes to return to normal when something causes them physical or emotional difficulties. Much like OEF officers, the majority of OIF officers marked needing only a few minutes (84 percent for OEF and 62 percent for OIF). However, significantly more OIF officers required more time. Two (8 percent) OEF officers needed up to an hour, one (4 percent)

needed a few hours, and one (4 percent) needed more than a day. Fifteen (20 percent) OIF officers reported needing up to an hour, twelve (16 percent) needed a few hours, and two (just under 3 percent) needed more than a day. OIF officers were also more likely to believe the amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger and 19 percent marked true to “Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again” compared to 12 percent of OEF officers marking true for this statement. Comparisons are shown in tables 4-32 through 4-43 in chapter four of this study.

In summary, OIF experienced students are more likely to have experienced more serious combat traumas and injuries and have lingering consequences. However, the majority of GWOT combat experienced students have experienced both OIF and OEF. Therefore, the relevance of learning which campaign they served in is diminished. The quantity of deployments may have more impact.

Differences between Number of Deployments

A comparison was done between officers who had one, two, and three or more combat deployments to any of the three Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) campaigns (OEF, OIF, and OND) since 9/11. As could be anticipated, officers who experienced more deployments had more experiences. They were also more likely to report that they felt they would not survive combat. Officers with more deployments were more likely to have had disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class and were more likely to have had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up. These officers were irritable and classroom discussions angered them. Officers with higher number of deployments were more likely to have experienced the classroom effects often or all the time and were more likely to agree that the amount of time it took to return to normal after something caused them to have physical or emotional difficulties varied depending on the trigger. Comparisons are shown in tables 4-44 through 4-55 in chapter four of this study.

These results support the findings of the RAND (2008) study and suggest that participants in this study with more-lengthy deployments are at substantially higher risk of suffering from PTSD, major depression, and probable TBI. Thus, an important question when learning about a combat experienced student’s experiences and needs is how many deployments they had into combat. This may provide more insight into the observable behaviors these students may bring into the classroom. Combat experienced students who served more

deployments were likely exposed to longer durations of combat and combat related stress. Thus, another important question may be how many total years of combat experience they have.

Differences in Total Years of Combat experience

As anticipated, officers with more years in combat reported more combat experiences and experienced many of them several times. Aside from feeling uncomfortable in class, these officers were significantly more likely to have reported resulting classroom effects. They were more likely to have been on alert for combat during class, were more easily startled, more easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience, and had disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class. They were more likely to have experienced triggers that made them feel as if a stressful combat experience was happening again and had physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminded them of a stressful combat experience. They were more easily angered during discussions, felt irritable, were tired in class, and had physical reactions simply because something got them wound up. They felt emotionally numb, felt distant or cut off from classmates, and avoided class activities/situations because they reminded them of a stressful combat experience.

Officers with more total time spent in combat reported that their combat experiences affected their ability to complete assignments and how well they are able to complete assignments. They caught themselves thinking about combat experiences while working on assignments and allowed distractions to interfere with completing assignments. Their combat experiences negatively affected their ability to remember what they read. Officers with more years of combat experience reported significantly higher for experiencing flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience, were angry about what happened during their combat experiences, and had difficulty moving on with their life. Their deployments increased their personal stress levels. Combat changed the way they view the world and their combat experiences changed the way they learn. Comparisons are shown in tables 4-56 through 4-67 in chapter four of this study.

Those with more years of experience also reported being a different person than they were prior to combat. RAND pointed out that “individuals with more-lengthy deployments and more-extensive exposure to combat trauma were at substantially greater risk of suffering from PTSD” (RAND, 2008, p. 98). RAND (2008) also explained that:

As with PTSD, individuals with more-lengthy deployments and more-extensive exposure to combat trauma are at greater risk of

meeting screening criteria for current major depression. Of particular note, the degree of exposure to combat trauma was the single-best predictor of both PTSD and major depression (p. 98).

The military OPTEMPO, a term used to by the military to describe the pace of everyday life for military members, significantly stressed the men and women who supported it. In addition to supporting the GWOT campaigns, several officers listed other deployments they experienced in which they engaged in combat. While some officers may have experienced only one or two years of combat, many spent as much as 8 of the last 12 years overseas, away from their family, in combat. Years of day-to-day threat, stress, and fighting will undoubtedly have physical and emotional consequences that will present themselves in the adult learning environment.

Research Question 7 – Are there differences between genders?

Does combat experience affect females differently than males? This study found few differences between genders. Significant differences were found for seven of the sixteen combat experience types and only one significant difference was found for classroom effects. Otherwise males and females responded in similar ways. Due to some restrictions of females performing combat roles it was anticipated they would have fewer combat experiences particularly regarding having been attacked or ambushed, experienced an IED, having seen others get severely injured or killed, or having been responsible for a death. They were also less likely to have experienced a nearby explosion or to have seen or smelled dead or decomposing bodies. Though females reported fewer combat experience types they were not significantly different than their male counterparts in any of the remaining survey items with one exception. Males were more likely to report feeling emotionally numb. RAND (2008) found that females are more likely than males to meet screening criteria for PTSD and major depression. These differences were not evident in this study except that females reported the same effects and challenges as their male counterparts without experiencing the same types of combat experiences. And, though they had less quantity of experiences, their suffrage was not significantly different than males. Comparisons are shown in tables 4-68 through 4-79 in chapter four of this study.

The females included in this study were officers. The RAND study included all ranks which would include a significantly higher number of enlisted females who are younger, less

educated, and in more vulnerable positions than the officers who participated in this study. Additionally, the instruments reviewed in the RAND study were psychometric inventories that may have influenced how males responded. “Regardless of gender or combat occupation specialty, today’s combatants all have one important bridge to eventually cross after their war is over...That is to come home” (Cantrell & Dean, 2007, p. XIII).

Research Question 8: Informing Educators – What personal recommendations do combat veterans have for educators?

The majority of participants provided statements regarding the varying types of experiences combat experienced students have had and how varying individuals respond differently to those experiences. This requires educators to avoid over-generalizations and consider each student based on their specific experiences and needs. The overarching message is to; know your students; talk to each person one-on-one to determine their needs, determine ahead of time what issues the student may have, and develop an efficient technique to address his/her combat experiences. Educators should have the ability to empathize with a person as needed, address each situation to the unique individual, and be aware that stressors vary from person to person.

Several of the students in this study provided educators specific things to keep in mind. First, the threshold for frustration is lower after war and certain discussions regarding ethics, death, or the requirement to talk about their combat experiences may incite personal emotions. Some students explained that comments or remarks made by people with no experience are bothersome and that the tone they express their opinions in can trigger hostility. They also suggest educators not to overstate a personal lack of experience. CGSC instructors were advised not to glorify what they have done in battle so as to establish seniority.

It is important for educators to realize that there are good days and bad days. Bad days make attending class and participating in activities more challenging. More breaks may be needed to help them get through the bad days or they may not show up at all. “The ability to step out when flashbacks occur” is important. And though it is helpful “to get the opportunity to walk out of class during a difficult subject” it is also helpful to provide a new direction for the class so that when they return the situation causing the trigger is changed.

The stress that deployments placed on their families adds to the stress they endured in combat. Returning home requires an investment in time spent with family members and a period of adjustment. Students who have been away from their families see their time as valuable and don't respond well to the demands of sitting through a class they don't consider meaningful. They recommend explaining why things are important and then leave it to them, as leaders and adults, to make the decision. Also remember that they are often seeking ways of applying the knowledge being taught to their job/soldiering/combat/ leadership. They want to know the 'so what' of a subject so they can apply the information to them.

The CGSC student are capable of determining what is or isn't important. As one student explained, "I will tell you that fear tactics don't work with combat vets." They enter a classroom with unique experiences that have changed the way they view the world. One explained, "Since combat I look at challenges from a threat level, current threats are prioritized and addressed in sequence." And another points out, "I'll never experience the rush of adrenaline like combat again and sometimes classroom time/education seems a moot point." Educators have a new challenge of exploring how combat experiences both enhance learning and inhibit learning participation. "Educators need to understand what these experiences mean to Soldiers and how it may have changed how we view events." Ultimately, one student explains that "expressing the overall value of an education on that individual is crucial to him/her remaining engaged and focused on learning vice wishing they were back in the field." As Cyril O. Houle (1993) explained in *The Inquiring Mind*, "If we are ever to understand the total phenomenon of continuing education, we must begin by understanding the nature, the beliefs, and the actions of those who take part to the highest degree" (p. 10).

With regards to completing assignments educators are informed that unclear or ambiguous assignments may quickly lead a student to anger therefore instructions should be clear and concise. Some students are finding it difficult to concentrate on reading or to stay motivated to provide thoughtful work rather than quick surface responses. Some students cautioned educators not to treat the combat experienced veterans like victims and instead hold them accountable for clear expectations.

Five officers wrote that sharing their experiences helped them think through them, and they recommended that writing or classroom opportunities be provided to allow the ability to share experiences. An assignment that requires them to write about a "life changing event"

provides a venue to “let us put on paper some of the things that we are feeling.” This is consistent discussion regarding narrative as a strategy for expressing those experiences that must be dealt with in the healing process (Shay, 2003; Hoge, 2010; Hart, 2000). Kaminer (2006) and Kearney and Perrott (2006) among others in their field caution that the research regarding the benefit of narratives is inconclusive and that narratives should not be used as a technique found in a tool kit. The students in this study cautioned that narrative assignments may invoke deep feelings and an alternate assignment should be available if the individual isn’t ready or is unable to write about their experiences.

Many students also spoke of the positive effects of their combat experiences. Some found that classroom and learning participation allowed them a positive activity that kept them focused and not thinking about their combat experiences. Some were motivated by their experiences to be better leaders and felt their experiences provided positive interactions in the classroom. They believed their combat experiences improved their capability to understand what was being taught and they benefitted from their combat tours. These experiences “teach one the value of life (in general) and specifically the value of time. They found their combat experiences to have shaped them and the way they view the world as positive. The enduring appeals of battle are explained by J. Glenn Gray (1970) in *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle*. In the following passage Gray explains battle as a liberating experience.

Many veterans who are honest with themselves will admit, I believe, that the experience of communal effort in battle, even under the altered conditions of modern war, has been a high point in their lives. Despite the horror, the weariness, the grime, and the hatred, participation with others in the chances of battle and its unforgettable side, which they would not want to have missed. For anyone who has not experienced it himself, the feeling is hard to comprehend, and for the participant, hard to explain to anyone else.

The sense of power and liberation that comes over men at such moments stems from a source beyond the union of men. I believe it is nothing less than the assurance of immortality that makes self-sacrifice at these moments so relatively easy. Men are true

comrades only when each is ready to give up his life for the other, without reflection and without thought of personal loss.

But in fact, death for men united with each other can be shared as few other of life's great moments can be.

(Gray, 1970, p. 46).

In summary, “understanding that homecoming has its own brand of stress is a first step in the process of a long-term successful reentry for military personnel, their families and the community” (Molitor et al., 2013). “What a returning soldier needs most when leaving war is not a mental health professional but a living community to whom his experience matters” (Shay, 2003, p.198). The combat veteran's experience not only matters but is integral in the democratic practice of the adult learning community.

Conclusions

Many of the students in this study had flashbacks or were triggered in class by conversations and war videos. They reported being easily angered, irritable, and less able to concentrate. Events such as arguments, traffic, or something not working caused them physical or emotional difficulties that sometimes lasted for a few minutes and sometimes more than a day. While some reported difficulties remembering their assignments or readings, others reported not being able to remember what happened to them while they were at war. This passage shows one example of this:

Combat experience has had no effect on my memory except of those events. I have compartmentalized some particularly violent events i.e. not remembering human limbs hanging from wires when people were blown apart. Stuff like that I have no recollection of even though everyone around me at that event clearly does.

The experiences these combat veterans endured and the stress of being in combat for an extended period of time through three, four, and more deployments during the GWOT left them with lingering challenges. This soldier explains:

I cannot watch a Veteran's parade or listen to a vignette that highlights those aspects of war because I get emotional and so I often have to think of something else.

Time heals was explained by a couple of students. What was challenging when they first returned did improve with time. This passage is one example:

When I first returned I felt some anxiety in public and anger while driving or while standing in lines or confined places. Several years later I rarely feel that irritation and pretty much feel as it is a normal irritation that any rational person might feel in public.

However, there are many who continue to need support and who aren't getting the help they need even when they do reach out for it. This soldier explains his or her situation:

I processed over 300 Soldiers with combat injuries during OIF 1 varying in survivability rate; 13 of those either DOWs or showed up as KIAs to our trauma room. I have never spoken to anyone official about that time... On three separate occasions, I attempted to reach out to Military One Source and all three occasions resulted in a counselor not being available, not returning a phone call, etc. It's not for lack of trying, but unfortunately, it didn't work out for me each time. I do wonder now, how much that experience is tied to my emotional stability.

This research sought to determine if combat experienced veterans had lingering effects that influence their educational participation in the adult learning environment and their ability to successfully complete the learning requirements. The students in this study were adults who had at least a bachelor degree, who were attending a master degree program, who are well-disciplined officers with incomes in excess of the average earnings for their age group, and who remain in the active duty environment with camaraderie. The findings were expected to be minimal. Unfortunately, they were not minimal and exceeded previous studies in many areas. The RAND study pointed out that “regardless of the sample, measurement tool, or time of assessment, combat duty and being wounded were consistently associated with positive screens for PTSD” (RAND, 2008, p. 51). The students who participated in this study had experienced

more deployments, more time in combat, and more combat traumas than the RAND (2008) study though the population consisted only of officers. This suggests that the remaining population, which includes younger warriors and those who were enlisted, also has higher levels of experiences, traumas, and resulting challenges. The Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) continues to haunt many of the veterans who fought in the war. The findings in this study support the need to learn more about combat experienced students. Thus, recommendations are provided for both the Command and General Staff College and for civilian colleges, universities and other adult education programs.

Recommendations for the Command and General Staff College (CGSC)

The findings of this study suggest several recommendations for CGSC and other similar military education classrooms.

1. Course Authors – Thirty two percent of the CGSC students in this study experienced flashbacks. Those who write the curriculum should be cognizant of the impact some activities can have on combat experienced veterans. Alternatives should be provided so that an instructor who has a situation in the class can alter the lesson plan to exclude vignettes or movie scenes that cause stress or triggering events for the students. As already demonstrated within CGSC by Shea and Fishback (2010), “A video clip used in class may conjure up memories that are painful enough that some students will leave the classroom” (p. 57). Shea also described a student who stated that although videos are valuable for some learning, they have “been extremely stressful to me” (Shea & Fishback, 2012, p. 58). Seventeen percent of the students in this study reported experiencing triggers in class that made them feel as if a stressful combat experience was happening again, and 25-42 percent had physical reactions because something reminded them of a stressful combat experience or got them wound up. Forty five percent of them were angered during classroom discussions and nine percent of the students responding to this study avoided class activities/situations because they reminded them of a stressful combat experience. These situations should be considered in planning classroom activities.
2. Faculty Development Program - Educational opportunities should be provided to the faculty and staff. It is recommended that seminars be provided to increase staff and faculty understanding of the lingering effects of combat. These educational opportunities could

provide guidance on recognizing when a student is having difficulties, developing educational plans for meeting their educational requirements, understanding triggering events, and adapting curriculum as needed. It is recommended that the faculty have an action plan for unanticipated situations and resources readily available for taking care of a student who has a situation in need of intervention. Suicide prevention training is not sufficient. A prevention plan that intercepts the need for suicide prevention is important.

3. Faculty and Instructors – Thirty two percent of CGSC students in this study responded that their combat experience changed the way they learn. The faculty should be aware of possible difficulties the students may be experiencing and consider accommodations when necessary such as allowing individuals to take a break or to have additional time to complete assignments. The faculty and instructors who have personal combat experience should be cognizant of their own personal needs regarding lingering effects, recurring PTSD, and triggering events. In a 20-year longitudinal study of the Trajectories of PTSD, Solomon and Mukulincer (2006) found that “the chronic nature of PTSD renders trauma victims vulnerable for life, and midlife is a particularly high-risk period for either delayed onset or reactivated PTSD” (p. 665). Even faculty without prior combat experience may have situations that may cause stress while teaching combat experienced students. Shea (2010) found that “In at least one case combat related stress is transferable and exacerbated by knowledge and proximity to active duty Soldiers” (p. 150).
4. CGSC Leadership – It is recommended that CGSC leadership take a proactive stance in confirming local area resources are available and ready to assist when called. A participant in this study reported having attempted to utilize resources multiple times and was unable to get a return call or help each time. The leadership, staff, and faculty should be aware of available resources, call or visit them to confirm their support is readily available, and ensure that a viable support system is in place for soldiers, airmen, and sailors returning from war or experiencing lingering difficulties.
5. Resources – Educational information should be readily available in classrooms, lounge areas, bathrooms, and in hallways. This information should include a verified viable contact for anyone in need of intervention.
6. Support Group – Civilian universities trying to meet the needs of their veterans have created veteran groups designed to provide support. CGSC could form a committee to organize a

group for students. This group could have a student from each section appointed to the group to provide additional support for their section and comrades. The group can create additional resources and contacts for individuals who have an immediate need. This may provide the necessary support when other resources fail. Shay (2003) argues that giving narrative to the traumas experienced in combat provides a conduit for healing. The group could find ways and opportunities for sharing their experiences, frustrations, and shared needs. Trauma victims who have not been given the opportunity to talk about the traumatic event will have more serious and long-lasting consequences. The ability “to express to other people emotions about the event and those involved in it, or to experience the presence of socially connected others who will not let one go through it alone” (Shay, 2003, p. 198) can mitigate those consequences.

Recommendations for Civilian Colleges, Universities, and other Adult Learning Environments

The findings of this study suggest several recommendations for civilian colleges, universities, and other adult learning environments.

1. Know who your veterans are – Relying on veterans to join a veterans’ group is insufficient. To properly be aware of combat experienced veterans’ needs we must first be aware of whom they are. Possible resources for compiling this knowledge include the financial aid office, the registrar’s office, and the local military installation. Many veterans utilize veteran benefits to pay tuition. This provides a valuable resource for knowing who your veterans are.
2. Registrar’s Office – The registrar’s office collects demographic information on all students. If no information is collected on veterans then a process for collecting this information is recommended. The registrar office should be aware who the veterans are and provide a report for the leadership and faculty to increase awareness of how many veterans are attending classes.
3. Faculty – The professional obligation for remaining current in knowledge expertise for civilian faculty is no different than that of the military faculty. Being aware and current on the needs combat experienced veterans may have in civilian education is important. Understanding the needs of students is an important part of the learning process (Brookfield & Preskill, 2005; Dewey, 1938; Wlodkowski, 1999). Having the ability to recognize a

situation and having a plan with supporting resources when a situation arises could improve the outcome for the combat experienced student and those surrounding him or her. Being aware of possible difficulties the students may be experiencing may provide insight into accommodations, such as allowing individuals to take a break or to have additional time to complete assignments, which may be necessary for combat experienced students.

Additionally, there are many combat experienced veterans who are now faculty members throughout the U.S. They too be aware of their own experiences and they may put them at risk or could be utilized to increase combat veteran support.

4. Leadership. It is recommended that college and university leadership take a proactive stance in confirming local area resources available and ready to assist when called. The leadership, staff, and faculty should be aware of available resources, call or visit them to confirm their support is readily available, and ensure that a viable support system is in place for soldiers, airmen, and sailors returning from war or experiencing lingering difficulties. Educational information could be made available in classrooms, lounge areas, bathroom, and hallways. This information should include a verified viable contact for anyone in need of intervention.
5. Student Services. Colleges and university student services could assist in developing veteran organizations. These organizations can provide transition seminars to assist veterans moving from the military into the college environment. They can include writing centers, math centers, and other student assistance that may be needed. Student services can be the conduit for communication to increase awareness of these resources and provide outreach.
6. Counselor centers – Veterans sometimes find themselves not knowing where they can go for help. Sometimes their seeking of help appears in the form of education and career counseling when there are other needs as well. Counselors should receive training to be aware of the unique needs of combat experienced students. They should be aware of local resources available for veterans and have information handy when a referral is needed. Get involved early in the veterans' education rather than awaiting a situation.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings in this study, the following suggestions for future research are offered:

1. **Military versus Civilian.** This study focused on a population in a military college. This population provided insight into the challenges military officers with combat experience face. The findings suggest that similar challenges are experienced in civilian colleges and universities. More than two million GWOT veterans in our communities need support. Those in particular need are those who have separated from military service. “Student veterans frequently re-enroll or enter college following active duty, and college and university officials need to be prepared to help ease their transition” (Rumann & Hamrick, 2009, p.29). It is recommended that the same or similar research be conducted within the civilian educational environment to determine the impact in colleges and universities less familiar with the military and the needs of combat experienced veterans.
2. This study focused on a population of military officers who are older and who already possess a college education of at least the bachelor level. The findings suggest that the challenges they experience may be more frequent and more challenging for soldier, airmen, and sailors who are younger and who are beginning their college education. These younger veterans lack college experience and may require additional support. The individuals who are/were enlisted soldiers, airmen, and sailors rather than officers were also more likely to experience combat traumas while also being less prepared to cope with them. It is recommended future research be conducted with all ranks and education levels.
3. **Mental and Physical Research** – Shay (2003) explains that many of the neurophysiological changes may require medication in addition to the psychological treatments. Sapolsky (2004) if the stress response is activated too often “the stress-response can become more damaging than the stressor” (p. 13). When we respond to a stressor the brain automatically moves into survival mode and shuts down unnecessary functions of the body. “If you repeatedly turn on the stress-response, or if you cannot turn off the stress-response at the end of a stressful event, the stress-response can eventually become damaging” (Sapolsky, 2004, p. 13). Participants who spoke of triggering events also spoke of the physical reactions they were unable to control. The lingering effects mentioned included memory, concentration,

motivation, anger, irritation, and sleep difficulties. Many of them use physical fitness to help alleviate their challenges and stress. More research regarding the long-term physical effects of combat experience is recommended. This should include the physical reactions of the body during stress and potential treatments.

4. Civilian Survivors of Warzones – Though this situation might not exist within the United States, the civilians in those wars likely experienced many of the same traumas experienced by the soldiers. They also may have unique experiences due to their homes and neighborhoods being infiltrated by bombings, shootings, and other combat scenarios. Many lost their homes, careers, and were forced to migrate to other countries. They too may enter the adult education environment as they transition into their new lives.
5. Intercity Trauma – There are trauma victims surviving everyday throughout the U.S. Many children and adults fight within their own homes and neighborhoods. Though they may not be in a declared warzone they are still experiencing shootings, attacks, and continuous fear. The ongoing stress of intercity life in some of America’s most dangerous neighborhoods will undoubtedly make attending adult education challenging. It is recommended that future research include civilian stress and trauma experienced in daily life.
6. Domestic Violence – Survivors of domestic violence such as alcoholic parents, child abuse, and spousal abuse often seek adult education as a way of improving their futures. Their traumas may have similar impacts as those of combat experienced veterans. Future research should include survivors of domestic violence.
7. Positive outcomes from combat experiences – Some participants in this study recommended that future use of the survey should include scale items to inquire about the positive effects of their combat experiences rather than focus purely on negative impacts. Thus, a recommendation for future research of positive outcomes from combat experiences is recommended.

Summary and Implications

Regardless of gender or combat occupation specialty, today's combatants all have one important bridge to eventually cross after their war is over...That is to come home. (Cantrell & Dean, 2007, p. XIII)

This research sought to go beyond determining if combat experienced veterans have PTSD, depression, or TBI. It sought to understand the persistent effects of their combat experiences regardless of a diagnosis. This research sought to understand how combat experienced veterans experience the adult education environment, what their challenges are, what their needs are, and what advice they offer for adult educators. Understanding how combat experience changes students is necessary.

Thousands of combat veterans have returned from combat experience and are re-entering daily living environments throughout the United States. Many will seek to continue their education through military and civilian institutions. Their unique experiences may impact the learning environments in which they participate. Though this study focused on one institution in which learning environments with combat experienced students occur, the results may have implications for other military educational facilities and public education arenas where combat experienced students participate in the learning environment.

Educational institutions across the United States have experienced growing numbers of students who are GWOT veterans. These numbers will continue to grow as more of them transition back into a life after combat and more of them leave the military to return to civilian life. More than two million warriors have served in the GWOT. The findings of this study were consistent with the RAND (2008) and Hoge et al. (2004) studies. The RAND (2008) study suggests that more than 600,000 of them will return with varying levels of combat trauma leading to PTSD, major depression, TBI, or potentially all three. Using the anticipated 41.9 percent calculation of veterans who will attend a college or university determined by Hermann, et al. in *Educating Veterans in the 21st Century* (2009), the adult education community can anticipate more than 250,000 students with significant lingering issues resulting from their combat experience. Still more will arrive with other issues resulting from the prolonged stress

experienced by all GWOT veterans. These military veterans will show up in classrooms throughout the United States.

Stress and anxiety can be the result of ... the quick flight from the foxhole to the front porch and no time to decompress en route. It may take some service members and family members time to readjust — and the failure to effectively manage during this period can create a great deal of stress, anxiety, frustration and anger (Molitor et al., 2013, p. 1).

It is important that faculty understand the characteristics of these adult learners and how their experiences shape classroom interactions. This research collected information on how combat experience affects combat veterans' participation in classroom activities and assignments, how their memory may be effected, and overall changes resulting from their combat experiences. The data gathered provides insight into the challenges and the overall difficulties military veterans face while participating in higher education activities after combat. An awareness of these challenges may inform curriculum development and provide faculty and facilitators the understanding necessary to create a learning environment that decreases the negative consequences of combat experience and increases positive educational experiences.

They I'll be over 80 years old and I'll still remember the day, time, what it felt like, everything.

Sergeant Vallery, The Gray Land, 2009.

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Appendix A - Pilot Survey Cronbach's Alpha Tables

Aggregate Tables

Overall Survey Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.877	.867	54

Combat Experience Types Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.892	.877	16

Classroom Effects Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.924	.923	14

Assignments, Reading, and Memory Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.943	.944	13

Overall Effects Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.852	.861	10

Tables less cases with no combat and less international officers

Overall Survey Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.880	.871	54

Combat Experience Types Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.881	.872	54

Classroom Effects Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.928	.927	14

Assignments, Reading, and Memory Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.944	.945	13

Overall Effects Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.783	.795	13

Army-Only Tables

Overall Survey Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items
.883	.871	54

Combat Experience Types Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items
.887	.870	16

Classroom Effects Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items
.926	.925	14

Assignments, Reading, and Memory Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items
.944	.944	13

Overall Effects Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	
Cronbach's Alpha		N of Items
.842	.849	10

Appendix B - Pilot Survey Kruskal-Wallis Tables for Gender Comparisons

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I had a friend who became a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.
Chi-Square	.266	3.270	2.163	6.755	1.752
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.606	.071	.141	.009	.186

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was sexually assaulted.	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.
Chi-Square	.128	.013	1.528	2.539	4.058	1.031
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.721	.910	.216	.111	.044	.310

	I saw dead bodies or human remains.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I conducted combat patrols or other dangerous duty.	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.
Chi-Square	6.139	4.337	1.893	1.583	.129
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.013	.037	.169	.208	.719

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted during class by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me while in class that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	.011	1.528	2.778	1.720	.844
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.915	.216	.096	.190	.358

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions in class (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable when in class.
Chi-Square	.698	.288	.036	1.972
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.403	.592	.849	.160

	I have physical reactions in class simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb while sitting in class.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	.439	.195	.013	.005	.541
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.508	.658	.910	.946	.462

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	.346	3.999	3.379	5.089	3.221
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.556	.046	.066	.024	.073

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.
Chi-Square	5.272	4.967	.412	1.272
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.022	.026	.521	.259

	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	.898	11.137	6.522	10.312
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.343	.001	.011	.001

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.004	.503	.000	.414	1.720
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.949	.478	1.000	.520	.190

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	.532	.753	.331	.097	.750
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.466	.386	.565	.755	.386

Appendix C - Final Survey Cronbach's Alpha Tables

Overall Survey Reliability Tables

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	209	88.9
	Excluded ^a	26	11.1
	Total	235	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.888	56

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	.094	-.525	.707	1.232	-1.347	.075	56

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
91.72	239.826	15.486	56

Combat Experience Types

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	235	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	235	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.876	.863	16

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	1.16	.562	235
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	2.02	1.076	235
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	2.54	1.199	235
I smelled decomposing bodies.	2.22	1.226	235
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	3.06	1.073	235
I was sexually assaulted.	1.01	.092	235
I was wounded/injured in combat.	1.16	.377	235
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	1.23	.698	235
I thought I would never survive.	1.70	1.019	235
I was responsible for a death.	1.88	1.204	235
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	1.41	.803	235
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	2.90	1.207	235
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	1.99	1.136	235
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	1.79	1.092	235
I was attacked or ambushed.	2.51	1.289	235
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	2.41	1.239	235

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	.282	-.067	.674	.742	-10.015	.028	16

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
30.99	92.128	9.598	16

Classroom Effects

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	224	95.3
	Excluded ^a	11	4.7
	Total	235	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.901	.904	14

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
I am easily startled during class.	1.31	.483	224
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	1.37	.606	224
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	1.41	.657	224
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	1.20	.441	224
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	1.14	.387	224
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	1.33	.558	224
Classroom discussions anger me.	1.54	.668	224
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	1.30	.533	224
I feel irritable.	1.69	.708	224
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	1.54	.714	224
I feel emotionally numb.	1.51	.792	224
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	1.33	.726	224
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	1.35	.579	224
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	1.10	.313	224

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	.402	.178	.701	.523	3.944	.011	14

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
19.12	30.663	5.537	14

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	229	97.4
	Excluded ^a	6	2.6
	Total	235	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.927	.929	14

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	1.13	.436	229
I have difficulty starting assignments.	1.47	.672	229
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	1.43	.642	229
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	1.61	.757	229
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	1.90	.885	229
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	1.36	.624	229
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	1.58	.743	229
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	1.30	.629	229
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	1.53	.710	229
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	2.23	.833	229
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	1.31	.633	229
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	1.76	.773	229
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	1.40	.645	229
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	1.55	.751	229

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	.482	.211	.745	.534	3.538	.014	14

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
21.54	49.828	7.059	14

Recovery Time

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	230	97.9
	Excluded ^a	5	2.1
	Total	235	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.723	.736	2

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	1.61	.832	230
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	2.02	.657	230

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	.582	.582	.582	.000	1.000	.000	2

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
3.63	1.761	1.327	2

Overall Effects

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	229	97.4
	Excluded ^a	6	2.6
	Total	235	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.806	.808	10

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	1.89	.313	229
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	1.84	.369	229
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	1.68	.467	229
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	1.27	.443	229
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	1.94	.240	229
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	1.68	.469	229
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	1.76	.431	229
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	1.28	.452	229
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	1.48	.501	229
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	1.77	.423	229

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Inter-Item Correlations	.296	.154	.628	.475	4.087	.008	10

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
16.58	6.350	2.520	10

Appendix D - Final Survey Kruskal-Wallis Tables

Branch of Service

Combat Experience Types

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted
Chi-Square	.568	2.217	4.439	7.807	8.550	.218
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.451	.137	.035	.005	.003	.641

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/ injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/ prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.
Chi-Square	2.362	3.281	.964	.238	1.411
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.124	.070	.326	.625	.235

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I saw dead bodies or human remains.	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	6.352	4.647	2.077	15.723	11.809
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.012	.031	.150	.000	.001

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Combat Experience Types - Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	235	1.16	.562	1	4
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	235	2.02	1.076	1	4
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	235	2.54	1.199	1	4
I smelled decomposing bodies.	235	2.22	1.226	1	4
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	235	3.06	1.073	1	4
I was sexually assaulted.	235	1.01	.092	1	2
I was wounded/injured in combat.	235	1.16	.377	1	3
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	235	1.23	.698	1	4
I thought I would never survive.	235	1.70	1.019	1	4
I was responsible for a death.	235	1.88	1.204	1	4
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	235	1.41	.803	1	4
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	235	2.90	1.207	1	4
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	235	1.99	1.136	1	4
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	235	1.79	1.092	1	4
I was attacked or ambushed.	235	2.51	1.289	1	4
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	235	2.41	1.239	1	4
Army Or Other Service Branches	235	1.10	.298	1	2

Combat Experience Types - Ranks

	Army Or Other Service Branches	N	Mean Rank
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	Army	212	118.54
	Other Service Branches	23	112.98
	Total	235	
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	Army	212	120.04
	Other Service Branches	23	99.17
	Total	235	
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	Army	212	120.96
	Other Service Branches	23	90.76
	Total	235	
I smelled decomposing bodies.	Army	212	121.84
	Other Service Branches	23	82.57
	Total	235	
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	Army	212	122.00
	Other Service Branches	23	81.17
	Total	235	
I was sexually assaulted.	Army	212	118.11
	Other Service Branches	23	117.00
	Total	235	
I was wounded/injured in combat.	Army	212	119.40
	Other Service Branches	23	105.09
	Total	235	
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	Army	212	119.46
	Other Service Branches	23	104.50
	Total	235	
I thought I would never survive.	Army	212	119.23
	Other Service Branches	23	106.70
	Total	235	

Combat Experience Types – Ranks Continued			
	Army Or Other Service Branches	N	Mean Rank
I was responsible for a death.	Army	212	118.62
	Other Service Branches	23	112.30
	Total	235	
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	Army	212	119.30
	Other Service Branches	23	106.00
	Total	235	
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	Army	212	121.46
	Other Service Branches	23	86.11
	Total	235	
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	Army	212	120.89
	Other Service Branches	23	91.39
	Total	235	
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	Army	212	119.87
	Other Service Branches	23	100.80
	Total	235	
I was attacked or ambushed.	Army	212	123.50
	Other Service Branches	23	67.28
	Total	235	
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	Army	212	122.80
	Other Service Branches	23	73.72
	Total	235	

Classroom Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	3.436	.216	.631	.316	.000
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.064	.642	.427	.574	.993

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb.
Chi-Square	.430	2.410	.004	3.612	.750	.637
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.512	.121	.948	.057	.386	.425

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I feel emotionally numb	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	.637	.000	.040	.614
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.425	.996	.841	.433

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Classroom Effects - Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I am easily startled during class.	235	1.31	.480	1	3
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.36	.600	1	4
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	234	1.41	.651	1	4
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	235	1.19	.432	1	3
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	232	1.14	.385	1	3
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	235	1.32	.551	1	4
Classroom discussions anger me.	234	1.54	.668	1	4
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.29	.524	1	4
I feel irritable.	235	1.68	.707	1	4
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	235	1.53	.712	1	4
I feel emotionally numb.	234	1.50	.782	1	4
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	235	1.33	.715	1	4
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	232	1.34	.575	1	4
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	233	1.09	.307	1	3
Army Or Other Service Branches	235	1.10	.298	1	2

Classroom Effects - Ranks			
	Army Or Other Service Branches	N	Mean Rank
I am easily startled during class.	Army	212	120.15
	Other Service Branches	23	98.20
	Total	235	
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	Army	212	118.54
	Other Service Branches	23	112.98
	Total	235	
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Army	211	118.46
	Other Service Branches	23	108.70
	Total	234	
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	Army	212	118.54
	Other Service Branches	23	113.07
	Total	235	
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	Army	209	116.51
	Other Service Branches	23	116.43
	Total	232	
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Army	212	118.75
	Other Service Branches	23	111.09
	Total	235	
Classroom discussions anger me.	Army	211	119.51
	Other Service Branches	23	99.09
	Total	234	
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	Army	212	117.93
	Other Service Branches	23	118.67
	Total	235	
I feel irritable.	Army	212	120.51
	Other Service Branches	23	94.89
	Total	235	
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	Army	212	119.11
	Other Service Branches	23	107.78
	Total	235	
I feel emotionally numb.	Army	211	118.49
	Other Service Branches	23	108.43
	Total	234	
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	Army	212	118.00
	Other Service Branches	23	117.96
	Total	235	
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	Army	210	116.27
	Other Service Branches	22	118.68
	Total	232	
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	Army	211	116.45
	Other Service Branches	22	122.32
	Total	233	

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	.023	5.212	1.055	6.263	5.648
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.880	.022	.304	.012	.017

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.
Chi-Square	2.901	3.320	.581	.367
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.089	.068	.446	.544

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	8.272	2.505	2.648	.007	1.594
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.004	.113	.104	.935	.207

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Assignments, Reading, and Memory - Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	235	1.13	.434	1	4
I have difficulty starting assignments.	235	1.47	.668	1	4
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	235	1.43	.646	1	4
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	235	1.60	.752	1	4
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	235	1.89	.892	1	4
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	234	1.35	.620	1	4
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	235	1.57	.739	1	4
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	234	1.30	.627	1	4
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	233	1.52	.708	1	4
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	234	2.21	.837	1	4
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	233	1.31	.629	1	4
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	234	1.75	.770	1	4
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	234	1.39	.641	1	4
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	233	1.55	.748	1	4
Army Or Other Service Branches	235	1.10	.298	1	2

Assignments, Reading, and Memory - Ranks			
	Army Or Other Service Branches	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	Army	212	118.11
	Other Service Branches	23	116.96
	Total	235	
I have difficulty starting assignments.	Army	212	120.86
	Other Service Branches	23	91.63
	Total	235	
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	Army	212	119.26
	Other Service Branches	23	106.35
	Total	235	
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	Army	212	121.27
	Other Service Branches	23	87.89
	Total	235	
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	Army	212	121.26
	Other Service Branches	23	87.98
	Total	235	
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	Army	211	119.47
	Other Service Branches	23	99.39
	Total	234	
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	Army	212	120.36
	Other Service Branches	23	96.26
	Total	235	
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	Army	211	118.31
	Other Service Branches	23	110.04
	Total	234	
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	Army	210	117.77
	Other Service Branches	23	109.93
	Total	233	
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	Army	211	121.33
	Other Service Branches	23	82.37
	Total	234	
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	Army	211	118.66
	Other Service Branches	22	101.07
	Total	233	
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	Army	211	119.67
	Other Service Branches	23	97.57
	Total	234	
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	Army	211	117.60
	Other Service Branches	23	116.61
	Total	234	
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	Army	210	118.62
	Other Service Branches	23	102.22
	Total	233	

Recovery Time

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	14.161	6.336
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.012

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Recovery Time - Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	232	1.61	.830	1	3
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	230	2.02	.657	1	3
Army Or Other Service Branches	235	1.10	.298	1	2

Ranks			
	Army Or Other Service Branches	N	Mean Rank
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Army	209	111.73
	Other Service Branches	23	159.80
	Total	232	
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	Army	207	112.22
	Other Service Branches	23	145.04
	Total	230	

Overall Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.
Chi-Square	.195	.010	6.299	11.873	.176	.023
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.659	.922	.012	.001	.675	.879

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	4.320	.023	5.088	.763	4.935
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.038	.879	.024	.382	.026

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Army Or Other Service Branches

Overall Effects - Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	235	1.89	.320	1	2
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	234	1.83	.373	1	2
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	235	1.68	.467	1	2
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	235	1.26	.442	1	2
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	235	1.94	.245	1	2
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	235	1.68	.469	1	2
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	234	1.75	.433	1	2
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	234	1.28	.449	1	2
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	234	1.48	.501	1	2
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	232	1.77	.421	1	2
Army Or Other Service Branches	235	1.10	.298	1	2

Ranks			
	Army Or Other Service Branches	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	Army	212	117.64
	Other Service Branches	23	121.28
	Total	235	
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	Army	211	117.59
	Other Service Branches	23	116.65
	Total	234	
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Army	212	115.04
	Other Service Branches	23	145.28
	Total	235	
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	Army	212	114.16
	Other Service Branches	23	153.41
	Total	235	
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	Army	212	117.74
	Other Service Branches	23	120.39
	Total	235	
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	Army	212	115.54
	Other Service Branches	23	140.67
	Total	235	
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	Army	211	117.67
	Other Service Branches	23	115.98
	Total	234	
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	Army	211	114.94
	Other Service Branches	23	140.96
	Total	234	
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	Army	211	116.40
	Other Service Branches	23	127.63
	Total	234	
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	Army	209	114.14
	Other Service Branches	23	137.96
	Total	232	

Types of Service

Combat Experience Types

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.
Chi-Square	.651	8.917	1.791	.253	.000
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.420	.003	.181	.615	.982

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was sexually assaulted.	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.
Chi-Square	.228	.169	.593	.372	.415
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.633	.681	.441	.542	.520

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was responsible for a death.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I was attacked or ambushed	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	1.451	1.238	3.945	.814	.245	.098
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.228	.266	.047	.367	.620	.754

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	235	1.16	.562	1	4
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	235	2.02	1.076	1	4
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	235	2.54	1.199	1	4
I smelled decomposing bodies.	235	2.22	1.226	1	4
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	235	3.06	1.073	1	4
I was sexually assaulted.	235	1.01	.092	1	2
I was wounded/injured in combat.	235	1.16	.377	1	3
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	235	1.23	.698	1	4
I thought I would never survive.	235	1.70	1.019	1	4
I was responsible for a death.	235	1.88	1.204	1	4
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	235	1.41	.803	1	4
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	235	2.90	1.207	1	4
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	235	1.99	1.136	1	4
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	235	1.79	1.092	1	4
I was attacked or ambushed.	235	2.51	1.289	1	4
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	235	2.41	1.239	1	4
Active Components or Reserve Components	235	1.10	.303	1	2

Ranks			
	Active Components or Reserve Components	N	Mean Rank
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	Active Components	211	118.60
	Reserve Components	24	112.75
	Total	235	
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	Active Components	211	122.19
	Reserve Components	24	81.13
	Total	235	
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	Active Components	211	119.92
	Reserve Components	24	101.10
	Total	235	
I smelled decomposing bodies.	Active Components	211	118.71
	Reserve Components	24	111.77
	Total	235	
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	Active Components	211	117.97
	Reserve Components	24	118.27
	Total	235	
I was sexually assaulted.	Active Components	211	118.11
	Reserve Components	24	117.00
	Total	235	
I was wounded/injured in combat.	Active Components	211	118.38
	Reserve Components	24	114.63
	Total	235	
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	Active Components	211	117.36
	Reserve Components	24	123.60
	Total	235	
I thought I would never survive.	Active Components	211	118.78
	Reserve Components	24	111.15
	Total	235	
I was responsible for a death.	Active Components	211	119.56
	Reserve Components	24	104.27
	Total	235	
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	Active Components	211	117.28
	Reserve Components	24	124.35
	Total	235	
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	Active Components	211	119.56
	Reserve Components	24	104.25
	Total	235	
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	Active Components	211	116.76
	Reserve Components	24	128.88
	Total	235	
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	Active Components	211	120.63
	Reserve Components	24	94.85
	Total	235	
I was attacked or ambushed.	Active Components	211	118.70
	Reserve Components	24	111.81
	Total	235	
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	Active Components	211	118.45
	Reserve Components	24	114.06
	Total	235	

Classroom Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	3.621	.802	3.039	.225	1.377
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.057	.370	.081	.636	.241

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.
Chi-Square	.202	.280	1.864	.016
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.653	.597	.172	.898

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	1.314	1.179	.773	1.588	.383
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.252	.278	.379	.208	.536

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I am easily startled during class.	235	1.31	.480	1	3
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.36	.600	1	4
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	234	1.41	.651	1	4
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	235	1.19	.432	1	3
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	232	1.14	.385	1	3
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	235	1.32	.551	1	4
Classroom discussions anger me.	234	1.54	.668	1	4
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.29	.524	1	4
I feel irritable.	235	1.68	.707	1	4
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	235	1.53	.712	1	4
I feel emotionally numb.	234	1.50	.782	1	4
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	235	1.33	.715	1	4
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	232	1.34	.575	1	4
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	233	1.09	.307	1	3
Active Components or Reserve Components	235	1.10	.303	1	2

Ranks			
	Active Components or Reserve Components	N	Mean Rank
I am easily startled during class.	Active Components	211	115.74
	Reserve Components	24	137.85
	Total	235	
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	Active Components	211	119.08
	Reserve Components	24	108.54
	Total	235	
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Active Components	210	115.34
	Reserve Components	24	136.38
	Total	234	
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	Active Components	211	117.54
	Reserve Components	24	122.06
	Total	235	
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	Active Components	208	115.48
	Reserve Components	24	125.35
	Total	232	
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Active Components	211	118.53
	Reserve Components	24	113.38
	Total	235	
Classroom discussions anger me.	Active Components	210	118.20
	Reserve Components	24	111.38
	Total	234	
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	Active Components	211	116.44
	Reserve Components	24	131.69
	Total	235	
I feel irritable.	Active Components	211	118.17
	Reserve Components	24	116.48
	Total	235	
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	Active Components	211	116.50
	Reserve Components	24	131.21
	Total	235	
I feel emotionally numb.	Active Components	210	116.12
	Reserve Components	24	129.54
	Total	234	
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	Active Components	211	117.05
	Reserve Components	24	126.31
	Total	235	
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	Active Components	208	114.99
	Reserve Components	24	129.58
	Total	232	
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	Active Components	209	116.54
	Reserve Components	24	121.00
	Total	233	

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	.981	4.566	3.686	2.837	.047
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.322	.033	.055	.092	.829

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.
Chi-Square	5.435	.018	.096	2.083	.607
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.020	.895	.757	.149	.436

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	1.427	.989	.606	2.518
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.232	.320	.436	.113

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	235	1.13	.434	1	4
I have difficulty starting assignments.	235	1.47	.668	1	4
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	235	1.43	.646	1	4
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	235	1.60	.752	1	4
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	235	1.89	.892	1	4
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	234	1.35	.620	1	4
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	235	1.57	.739	1	4
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	234	1.30	.627	1	4
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	233	1.52	.708	1	4
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	234	2.21	.837	1	4
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	233	1.31	.629	1	4
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	234	1.75	.770	1	4
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	234	1.39	.641	1	4
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	233	1.55	.748	1	4
Active Components or Reserve Components	235	1.10	.303	1	2

Ranks			
	Active Components or Reserve Components	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	Active Components	211	118.76
	Reserve Components	24	111.29
	Total	235	
I have difficulty starting assignments.	Active Components	211	115.26
	Reserve Components	24	142.10
	Total	235	
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	Active Components	211	115.58
	Reserve Components	24	139.27
	Total	235	
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	Active Components	211	115.75
	Reserve Components	24	137.79
	Total	235	
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	Active Components	211	118.30
	Reserve Components	24	115.33
	Total	235	
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	Active Components	210	114.73
	Reserve Components	24	141.71
	Total	234	
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	Active Components	211	118.18
	Reserve Components	24	116.46
	Total	235	
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	Active Components	210	117.16
	Reserve Components	24	120.46
	Total	234	
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	Active Components	210	118.84
	Reserve Components	23	100.17
	Total	233	
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	Active Components	210	116.44
	Reserve Components	24	126.79
	Total	234	
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	Active Components	209	115.68
	Reserve Components	24	128.46
	Total	233	
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	Active Components	210	116.14
	Reserve Components	24	129.40
	Total	234	
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	Active Components	210	116.55
	Reserve Components	24	125.83
	Total	234	
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	Active Components	209	114.92
	Reserve Components	24	135.15
	Total	233	

Recovery Time

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	.217	.246
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.642	.620

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	232	1.61	.830	1	3
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	230	2.02	.657	1	3
Active Components or Reserve Components	235	1.10	.303	1	2

Ranks

	Active Components or Reserve Components	N	Mean Rank
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Active Components	208	117.10
	Reserve Components	24	111.27
	Total	232	
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	Active Components	206	116.16
	Reserve Components	24	109.81
	Total	230	

Overall Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.027	2.996	.093	.106	4.710
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.870	.083	.761	.745	.030

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	.655	.001	.640	1.146	.152
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.418	.980	.424	.284	.697

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Active Components or Reserve Components

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	235	1.89	.320	1	2
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	234	1.83	.373	1	2
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	235	1.68	.467	1	2
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	235	1.26	.442	1	2
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	235	1.94	.245	1	2
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	235	1.68	.469	1	2
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	234	1.75	.433	1	2
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	234	1.28	.449	1	2
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	234	1.48	.501	1	2
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	232	1.77	.421	1	2
Active Components or Reserve Components	235	1.10	.303	1	2

Ranks			
	Active Components or Reserve Components	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	Active Components	211	118.14
	Reserve Components	24	116.81
	Total	235	
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	Active Components	210	119.17
	Reserve Components	24	102.88
	Total	234	
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Active Components	211	117.63
	Reserve Components	24	121.23
	Total	235	
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	Active Components	211	117.63
	Reserve Components	24	121.27
	Total	235	
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	Active Components	211	119.37
	Reserve Components	24	105.92
	Total	235	
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	Active Components	211	117.02
	Reserve Components	24	126.63
	Total	235	
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	Active Components	210	117.53
	Reserve Components	24	117.25
	Total	234	
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	Active Components	210	118.43
	Reserve Components	24	109.38
	Total	234	
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	Active Components	210	118.89
	Reserve Components	24	105.38
	Total	234	
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	Active Components	209	116.91
	Reserve Components	23	112.74
	Total	232	

Location of Combat Deployments

Combat Experience Types

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted.
Chi-Square	2.879	3.741	9.589	7.462	9.190	.398
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.237	.154	.008	.024	.010	.819

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.
Chi-Square	5.731	3.954	8.624	13.539	3.033	6.043
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.057	.138	.013	.001	.219	.049

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	5.264	8.278	10.089	13.962
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.072	.016	.006	.001

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	235	1.16	.562	1	4
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	235	2.02	1.076	1	4
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	235	2.54	1.199	1	4
I smelled decomposing bodies.	235	2.22	1.226	1	4
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	235	3.06	1.073	1	4
I was sexually assaulted.	235	1.01	.092	1	2
I was wounded/injured in combat.	235	1.16	.377	1	3
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	235	1.23	.698	1	4
I thought I would never survive.	235	1.70	1.019	1	4
I was responsible for a death.	235	1.88	1.204	1	4
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	235	1.41	.803	1	4
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	235	2.90	1.207	1	4
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	235	1.99	1.136	1	4
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	235	1.79	1.092	1	4
I was attacked or ambushed.	235	2.51	1.289	1	4
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	235	2.41	1.239	1	4
OIF, OEF, BOTH	233	2.44	.687	1	3

Kruskal-Wallis Test – Ranks Continued			
	OIF, OEF, BOTH	N	Mean Rank
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	OEF	26	106.50
	OIF	78	118.30
	OEF and OIF	129	118.33
	Total	233	
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	OEF	26	105.62
	OIF	78	108.96
	OEF and OIF	129	124.16
	Total	233	
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	OEF	26	86.10
	OIF	78	111.01
	OEF and OIF	129	126.85
	Total	233	
I smelled decomposing bodies.	OEF	26	85.29
	OIF	78	118.58
	OEF and OIF	129	122.44
	Total	233	
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	OEF	26	83.52
	OIF	78	115.73
	OEF and OIF	129	124.52
	Total	233	
I was sexually assaulted.	OEF	26	116.00
	OIF	78	117.49
	OEF and OIF	129	116.90
	Total	233	
I was wounded/injured in combat.	OEF	26	99.00
	OIF	78	116.85
	OEF and OIF	129	120.72
	Total	233	
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	OEF	26	103.50
	OIF	78	120.00
	OEF and OIF	129	117.91
	Total	233	
I thought I would never survive.	OEF	26	88.13
	OIF	78	114.69
	OEF and OIF	129	124.21
	Total	233	
I was responsible for a death.	OEF	26	91.23
	OIF	78	105.55
	OEF and OIF	129	129.12
	Total	233	
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	OEF	26	104.98
	OIF	78	123.86
	OEF and OIF	129	115.28
	Total	233	
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	OEF	26	89.63
	OIF	78	116.16
	OEF and OIF	129	123.02
	Total	233	
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	OEF	26	91.19
	OIF	78	122.56
	OEF and OIF	129	118.84
	Total	233	

Kruskal-Wallis Test – Ranks Continued

I had to handle or uncover human remains.	OEF	26	87.27
	OIF	78	115.22
	OEF and OIF	129	124.07
	Total	233	
I was attacked or ambushed.	OEF	26	79.77
	OIF	78	119.08
	OEF and OIF	129	123.25
	Total	233	
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	OEF	26	72.81
	OIF	78	125.43
	OEF and OIF	129	120.81
	Total	233	

Classroom Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	1.821	2.446	3.800	.734	1.070
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.402	.294	.150	.693	.586

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).
Chi-Square	3.301	11.702	3.457	9.329	12.054
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.192	.003	.178	.009	.002

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	4.081	2.110	5.474	2.916
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.130	.348	.065	.233

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I am easily startled during class.	235	1.31	.480	1	3
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.36	.600	1	4
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	234	1.41	.651	1	4
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	235	1.19	.432	1	3
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	232	1.14	.385	1	3
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	235	1.32	.551	1	4
Classroom discussions anger me.	234	1.54	.668	1	4
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.29	.524	1	4
I feel irritable.	235	1.68	.707	1	4
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	235	1.53	.712	1	4
I feel emotionally numb.	234	1.50	.782	1	4
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	235	1.33	.715	1	4
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	232	1.34	.575	1	4
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	233	1.09	.307	1	3
OIF, OEF, BOTH	233	2.44	.687	1	3

Kruskal-Wallis – Ranks			
	OEF or OIF	N	Mean Rank
I am easily startled during class.	OEF	26	47.00
	OIF	78	54.33
	Total	104	
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	OEF	26	48.85
	OIF	78	53.72
	Total	104	
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	OEF	26	49.92
	OIF	78	53.36
	Total	104	
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	OEF	26	50.81
	OIF	78	53.06
	Total	104	
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	OEF	25	50.80
	OIF	78	52.38
	Total	103	
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	OEF	26	50.40
	OIF	78	53.20
	Total	104	
Classroom discussions anger me.	OEF	26	45.54
	OIF	78	54.82
	Total	104	
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	OEF	26	45.38
	OIF	78	54.87
	Total	104	
I feel irritable.	OEF	26	44.44
	OIF	78	55.19
	Total	104	
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	OEF	26	43.38
	OIF	78	55.54
	Total	104	
I feel emotionally numb.	OEF	26	52.63
	OIF	78	52.46
	Total	104	
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	OEF	26	51.35
	OIF	78	52.88
	Total	104	
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	OEF	25	42.38
	OIF	78	55.08
	Total	103	
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	OEF	26	48.50
	OIF	78	53.83
	Total	104	

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.
Chi-Square	1.630	3.615	6.140	5.403	4.403	5.600
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.443	.164	.046	.067	.111	.061

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.
Chi-Square	2.653	4.901	3.310	5.293
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.265	.086	.191	.071

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	4.262	3.695	8.089	2.734
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.119	.158	.018	.255

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	235	1.13	.434	1	4
I have difficulty starting assignments.	235	1.47	.668	1	4
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	235	1.43	.646	1	4
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	235	1.60	.752	1	4
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	235	1.89	.892	1	4
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	234	1.35	.620	1	4
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	235	1.57	.739	1	4
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	234	1.30	.627	1	4
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	233	1.52	.708	1	4
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	234	2.21	.837	1	4
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	233	1.31	.629	1	4
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	234	1.75	.770	1	4
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	234	1.39	.641	1	4
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	233	1.55	.748	1	4
OIF, OEF, BOTH	233	2.44	.687	1	3

Kruskal-Willis – Ranks			
	OEF or OIF	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	OEF	26	50.48
	OIF	78	53.17
	Total	104	
I have difficulty starting assignments.	OEF	26	44.54
	OIF	78	55.15
	Total	104	
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	OEF	26	42.81
	OIF	78	55.73
	Total	104	
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	OEF	26	44.37
	OIF	78	55.21
	Total	104	
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	OEF	26	47.00
	OIF	78	54.33
	Total	104	
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	OEF	26	42.27
	OIF	77	55.29
	Total	103	
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	OEF	26	50.65
	OIF	78	53.12
	Total	104	
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	OEF	26	47.63
	OIF	78	54.12
	Total	104	
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	OEF	26	48.56
	OIF	76	52.51
	Total	102	
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	OEF	26	42.46
	OIF	77	55.22
	Total	103	
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	OEF	26	45.27
	OIF	77	54.27
	Total	103	
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	OEF	26	42.96
	OIF	77	55.05
	Total	103	
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	OEF	26	44.83
	OIF	77	54.42
	Total	103	
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	OEF	26	44.27
	OIF	77	54.61
	Total	103	

Recovery Time

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	13.387	7.455
df	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.001	.024

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OEF, OIF, BOTH

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	232	1.61	.830	1	3
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	230	2.02	.657	1	3
OIF, OEF, BOTH	233	2.44	.687	1	3

Kruskal-Wallis – Ranks

	OIF, OEF, BOTH	N	Mean Rank
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	OEF	26	153.15
	OIF	77	105.68
	OEF and OIF	127	113.75
	Total	230	
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	OEF	26	143.62
	OIF	75	113.67
	OEF and OIF	127	109.03
	Total	228	

Overall Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.	My combat experience changed the way I learn.
Chi-Square	3.269	2.272	1.202	6.046	1.336	7.785
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.195	.321	.548	.049	.513	.020

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	7.785	7.513	5.042	5.290	2.005
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.020	.023	.080	.071	.367

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: OIF, OEF, BOTH

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	235	1.89	.320	1	2
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	234	1.83	.373	1	2
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	235	1.68	.467	1	2
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	235	1.26	.442	1	2
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	235	1.94	.245	1	2
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	235	1.68	.469	1	2
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	234	1.75	.433	1	2
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	234	1.28	.449	1	2
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	234	1.48	.501	1	2
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	232	1.77	.421	1	2
OIF, OEF, BOTH	233	2.44	.687	1	3

Kruskal-Wallis – Ranks			
	OIF, OEF, BOTH	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	OEF	26	126.02
	OIF	78	120.04
	OEF and OIF	129	113.34
	Total	233	
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	OEF	26	117.65
	OIF	78	122.12
	OEF and OIF	128	112.84
	Total	232	
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	OEF	26	127.62
	OIF	78	117.16
	OEF and OIF	129	114.76
	Total	233	
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	OEF	26	140.27
	OIF	78	114.88
	OEF and OIF	129	113.59
	Total	233	
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	OEF	26	120.02
	OIF	78	114.04
	OEF and OIF	129	118.18
	Total	233	
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	OEF	26	141.56
	OIF	78	120.65
	OEF and OIF	129	109.84
	Total	233	
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	OEF	26	127.65
	OIF	78	126.17
	OEF and OIF	128	108.34
	Total	232	
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	OEF	26	138.04
	OIF	78	114.24
	OEF and OIF	128	113.50
	Total	232	
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	OEF	26	140.81
	OIF	78	115.53
	OEF and OIF	128	112.16
	Total	232	
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	OEF	26	119.88
	OIF	77	109.14
	OEF and OIF	127	118.46
	Total	230	

Number of Deployments into Combat

Combat Experiences

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted.
Chi-Square	1.816	11.559	17.184	7.118	10.747	.528
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.403	.003	.000	.028	.005	.768

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.
Chi-Square	2.792	4.472	11.216	12.974	.573	14.107
df	2	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.248	.107	.004	.002	.751	.001

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	4.253	10.729	16.102	16.597
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.119	.005	.000	.000

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	236	1.16	.561	1	4
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	236	2.02	1.076	1	4
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	236	2.53	1.201	1	4
I smelled decomposing bodies.	236	2.21	1.226	1	4
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	236	3.06	1.072	1	4
I was sexually assaulted.	236	1.01	.092	1	2
I was wounded/injured in combat.	236	1.16	.376	1	3
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	236	1.23	.697	1	4
I thought I would never survive.	236	1.70	1.018	1	4
I was responsible for a death.	236	1.87	1.203	1	4
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	236	1.41	.801	1	4
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	236	2.90	1.204	1	4
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	236	1.99	1.135	1	4
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	236	1.79	1.090	1	4
I was attacked or ambushed.	236	2.50	1.290	1	4
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	236	2.41	1.239	1	4
GWOT 3 or More	236	2.43	.714	1	3

Ranks			
	GWOT Combat Deployments	N	Mean Rank
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	One	31	111.60
	Two	72	117.74
	Three or More	133	120.52
	Total	236	
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	One	31	91.76
	Two	72	108.49
	Three or More	133	130.15
	Total	236	
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	One	31	76.21
	Two	72	115.40
	Three or More	133	130.03
	Total	236	
I smelled decomposing bodies.	One	31	91.58
	Two	72	116.92
	Three or More	133	125.63
	Total	236	
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	One	31	86.98
	Two	72	114.60
	Three or More	133	127.95
	Total	236	
I was sexually assaulted.	One	31	117.50
	Two	72	119.14
	Three or More	133	118.39
	Total	236	
I was wounded/injured in combat.	One	31	108.08
	Two	72	116.82
	Three or More	133	121.84
	Total	236	
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	One	31	109.11
	Two	72	114.53
	Three or More	133	122.83
	Total	236	
I thought I would never survive.	One	31	87.66
	Two	72	117.01
	Three or More	133	126.49
	Total	236	
I was responsible for a death.	One	31	84.52
	Two	72	117.56
	Three or More	133	126.93
	Total	236	
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	One	31	112.21
	Two	72	118.56
	Three or More	133	119.93
	Total	236	
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	One	31	78.73
	Two	72	120.64
	Three or More	133	126.61
	Total	236	

Ranks Continued			
	GWOT Combat Deployments	N	Mean Rank
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	One	31	96.92
	Two	72	121.47
	Three or More	133	121.92
	Total	236	
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	One	31	85.92
	Two	72	120.00
	Three or More	133	125.28
	Total	236	
I was attacked or ambushed.	One	31	75.21
	Two	72	127.75
	Three or More	133	123.58
	Total	236	
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	One	31	76.87
	Two	72	115.81
	Three or More	133	129.66
	Total	236	

Classroom Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	3.356	1.272	2.740	2.843	3.034
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.187	.529	.254	.241	.219

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).
Chi-Square	6.695	8.762	5.020	12.479	10.446
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.035	.013	.081	.002	.005

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	4.391	.907	2.495	1.685
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.111	.635	.287	.431

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I am easily startled during class.	235	1.31	.480	1	3
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.36	.600	1	4
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	234	1.41	.651	1	4
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	235	1.19	.432	1	3
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	232	1.14	.385	1	3
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	235	1.32	.551	1	4
Classroom discussions anger me.	234	1.54	.668	1	4
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.29	.524	1	4
I feel irritable.	235	1.68	.707	1	4
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	235	1.53	.712	1	4
I feel emotionally numb.	234	1.50	.782	1	4
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	235	1.33	.715	1	4
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	232	1.34	.575	1	4
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	233	1.09	.307	1	3
GWOT 3 or More	236	2.43	.714	1	3

Ranks			
	GWOT Combat Deployments	N	Mean Rank
I am easily startled during class.	One	31	101.79
	Two	72	122.32
	Three or More	132	119.45
	Total	235	
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	One	31	108.69
	Two	72	116.91
	Three or More	132	120.78
	Total	235	
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	One	31	104.44
	Two	72	114.77
	Three or More	131	122.09
	Total	234	
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	One	31	109.18
	Two	72	114.32
	Three or More	132	122.08
	Total	235	
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	One	30	109.13
	Two	72	112.63
	Three or More	130	120.34
	Total	232	

Ranks - Continued			
	GWOT Combat Deployments	N	Mean Rank
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	One	31	95.98
	Two	72	117.49
	Three or More	132	123.45
	Total	235	
Classroom discussions anger me.	One	31	92.00
	Two	72	112.82
	Three or More	131	126.11
	Total	234	
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	One	31	98.58
	Two	72	121.35
	Three or More	132	120.73
	Total	235	
I feel irritable.	One	31	82.77
	Two	72	118.40
	Three or More	132	126.05
	Total	235	
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	One	31	85.84
	Two	72	121.78
	Three or More	132	123.49
	Total	235	
I feel emotionally numb.	One	31	100.48
	Two	72	114.04
	Three or More	131	123.43
	Total	234	
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	One	31	110.98
	Two	72	117.15
	Three or More	132	120.11
	Total	235	
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	One	31	103.18
	Two	71	121.33
	Three or More	130	117.04
	Total	232	
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	One	31	110.24
	Two	72	119.53
	Three or More	130	117.21
	Total	233	

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	1.632	1.181	2.466	4.545	5.491
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.442	.554	.291	.103	.064

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.
Chi-Square	3.111	2.934	2.256	4.723
df	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.211	.231	.324	.094

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	.982	1.339	1.139	2.352	1.617
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.612	.512	.566	.308	.446

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	236	1.13	.434	1	4
I have difficulty starting assignments.	236	1.47	.668	1	4
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	236	1.43	.645	1	4
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	236	1.60	.752	1	4
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	236	1.89	.892	1	4
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	235	1.35	.619	1	4
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	236	1.56	.738	1	4
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	235	1.30	.625	1	4
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	234	1.52	.707	1	4
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	235	2.21	.839	1	4
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	234	1.31	.628	1	4
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	235	1.74	.770	1	4
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	235	1.39	.640	1	4
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	234	1.54	.747	1	4
GWOT 3 or More	236	2.43	.714	1	3

Ranks			
	GWOT Combat Deployments	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	One	31	114.45
	Two	72	115.53
	Three or More	133	121.05
	Total	236	
I have difficulty starting assignments.	One	31	108.65
	Two	72	122.27
	Three or More	133	118.76
	Total	236	
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	One	31	131.50
	Two	72	120.90
	Three or More	133	114.17
	Total	236	
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	One	31	102.63
	Two	72	129.34
	Three or More	133	116.33
	Total	236	
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	One	31	94.79
	Two	72	126.79
	Three or More	133	119.54
	Total	236	
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	One	31	105.58
	Two	72	125.51
	Three or More	132	116.82
	Total	235	
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	One	31	101.21
	Two	72	121.81
	Three or More	133	120.74
	Total	236	
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	One	31	105.69
	Two	72	120.94
	Three or More	132	119.28
	Total	235	
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	One	30	95.63
	Two	71	120.11
	Three or More	133	121.04
	Total	234	
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	One	31	107.76
	Two	71	119.04
	Three or More	133	119.83
	Total	235	
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	One	31	108.16
	Two	71	120.27
	Three or More	132	118.20
	Total	234	

Ranks - Continued			
	GWOT Combat Deployments	N	Mean Rank
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	One	31	108.00
	Two	71	116.77
	Three or More	133	120.99
	Total	235	
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	One	31	109.02
	Two	71	125.70
	Three or More	133	115.98
	Total	235	
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	One	31	107.73
	Two	71	114.42
	Three or More	132	121.45
	Total	234	

Recovery Time

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	7.150	4.144
df	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.028	.126

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	233	1.61	.830	1	3
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	231	2.02	.656	1	3
GWOT Combat Deployments	236	2.43	.714	1	3

Ranks			
	GWOT Combat Deployments	N	Mean Rank
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	One	31	126.29
	Two	70	101.49
	Three or More	132	123.04
	Total	233	
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	One	30	135.13
	Two	69	108.71
	Three or More	132	115.46
	Total	231	

Overall Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.883	.370	3.925	2.622	1.005
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.643	.831	.141	.270	.605

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	2.720	3.729	5.421	5.689	1.724
df	2	2	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.257	.155	.067	.058	.422

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: GWOT 3 or More

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	236	1.89	.319	1	2
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	235	1.83	.373	1	2
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	236	1.68	.467	1	2
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	236	1.27	.443	1	2
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	236	1.94	.244	1	2
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	236	1.68	.468	1	2
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	235	1.75	.432	1	2
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	235	1.28	.450	1	2
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	235	1.48	.501	1	2
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	233	1.77	.420	1	2
GWOT 3 or More	236	2.43	.714	1	3

Ranks			
	GWOT Combat Deployments	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	One	31	124.39
	Two	72	117.25
	Three or More	133	117.80
	Total	236	
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	One	31	122.34
	Two	72	117.92
	Three or More	132	117.03
	Total	235	
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	One	31	133.16
	Two	72	110.11
	Three or More	133	119.62
	Total	236	
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	One	31	132.68
	Two	72	116.50
	Three or More	133	116.28
	Total	236	
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	One	31	122.19
	Two	72	116.17
	Three or More	133	118.90
	Total	236	
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	One	31	133.66
	Two	72	117.17
	Three or More	133	115.69
	Total	236	
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	One	31	131.84
	Two	72	120.89
	Three or More	132	113.17
	Total	235	
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	One	31	138.06
	Two	72	117.64
	Three or More	132	113.48
	Total	235	
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	One	31	141.10
	Two	72	112.09
	Three or More	132	115.80
	Total	235	
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	One	31	120.95
	Two	71	110.68
	Three or More	131	119.49
	Total	233	

Total Years in Combat Deployments

Combat Experience Types

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted.
Chi-Square	.263	11.791	14.722	4.508	5.418	.998
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.608	.001	.000	.034	.020	.318

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.
Chi-Square	5.527	7.103	8.929	10.148	1.338	9.076
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.019	.008	.003	.001	.247	.003

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	1.856	12.539	2.418	7.455
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.173	.000	.120	.006

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	235	1.16	.562	1	4
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	235	2.02	1.076	1	4
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	235	2.54	1.199	1	4
I smelled decomposing bodies.	235	2.22	1.226	1	4
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	235	3.06	1.073	1	4
I was sexually assaulted.	235	1.01	.092	1	2
I was wounded/injured in combat.	235	1.16	.377	1	3
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	235	1.23	.698	1	4
I thought I would never survive.	235	1.70	1.019	1	4
I was responsible for a death.	235	1.88	1.204	1	4
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	235	1.41	.803	1	4
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	235	2.90	1.207	1	4
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	235	1.99	1.136	1	4
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	235	1.79	1.092	1	4
I was attacked or ambushed.	235	2.51	1.289	1	4
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	235	2.41	1.239	1	4
Total Time Deployed	235	1.33	.472	1	2

Ranks			
	Total Time Deployed	N	Mean Rank
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	3 Years or Less	157	117.21
	More than 3 Years	78	119.60
	Total	235	
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	3 Years or Less	157	107.92
	More than 3 Years	78	138.29
	Total	235	
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	3 Years or Less	157	106.48
	More than 3 Years	78	141.18
	Total	235	
I smelled decomposing bodies.	3 Years or Less	157	111.75
	More than 3 Years	78	130.58
	Total	235	
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	3 Years or Less	157	111.19
	More than 3 Years	78	131.70
	Total	235	
I was sexually assaulted.	3 Years or Less	157	118.50
	More than 3 Years	78	117.00
	Total	235	
I was wounded/injured in combat.	3 Years or Less	157	113.41
	More than 3 Years	78	127.23
	Total	235	
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	3 Years or Less	157	113.39
	More than 3 Years	78	127.28
	Total	235	
I thought I would never survive.	3 Years or Less	157	110.01
	More than 3 Years	78	134.08
	Total	235	
I was responsible for a death.	3 Years or Less	157	109.37
	More than 3 Years	78	135.37
	Total	235	
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	3 Years or Less	157	115.29
	More than 3 Years	78	123.46
	Total	235	
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	3 Years or Less	157	109.15
	More than 3 Years	78	135.81
	Total	235	
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	3 Years or Less	157	114.10
	More than 3 Years	78	125.86
	Total	235	
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	3 Years or Less	157	108.19
	More than 3 Years	78	137.74
	Total	235	
I was attacked or ambushed.	3 Years or Less	157	113.38
	More than 3 Years	78	127.29
	Total	235	
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	3 Years or Less	157	109.83
	More than 3 Years	78	134.44
	Total	235	

Classroom Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).
Chi-Square	14.818	10.630	8.015	8.009
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.001	.005	.005

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am still on alert for combat when in class.	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.
Chi-Square	11.173	9.559	14.253	9.033	8.166
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.001	.002	.000	.003	.004

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	8.700	7.402	5.726	2.891	6.161
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.003	.007	.017	.089	.013

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I am easily startled during class.	235	1.31	.480	1	3
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.36	.600	1	4
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	234	1.41	.651	1	4
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	235	1.19	.432	1	3
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	232	1.14	.385	1	3
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	235	1.32	.551	1	4
Classroom discussions anger me.	234	1.54	.668	1	4
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.29	.524	1	4
I feel irritable.	235	1.68	.707	1	4
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	235	1.53	.712	1	4
I feel emotionally numb.	234	1.50	.782	1	4
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	235	1.33	.715	1	4
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	232	1.34	.575	1	4
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	233	1.09	.307	1	3
Total Time Deployed	235	1.33	.472	1	2

Ranks			
	Total Time Deployed	N	Mean Rank
I am easily startled during class.	3 Years or Less	157	108.45
	More than 3 Years	78	137.22
	Total	235	
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	3 Years or Less	157	109.82
	More than 3 Years	78	134.47
	Total	235	
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	3 Years or Less	156	110.17
	More than 3 Years	78	132.15
	Total	234	
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	3 Years or Less	157	112.23
	More than 3 Years	78	129.61
	Total	235	
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	3 Years or Less	155	110.46
	More than 3 Years	77	128.66
	Total	232	
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	3 Years or Less	157	110.43
	More than 3 Years	78	133.23
	Total	235	
Classroom discussions anger me.	3 Years or Less	157	107.15
	More than 3 Years	77	138.61
	Total	234	
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	3 Years or Less	157	110.84
	More than 3 Years	78	132.42
	Total	235	
I feel irritable.	3 Years or Less	157	109.93
	More than 3 Years	78	134.24
	Total	235	
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	3 Years or Less	157	109.92
	More than 3 Years	78	134.26
	Total	235	
I feel emotionally numb.	3 Years or Less	156	110.29
	More than 3 Years	78	131.92
	Total	234	
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	3 Years or Less	157	112.62
	More than 3 Years	78	128.83
	Total	235	
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	3 Years or Less	155	112.27
	More than 3 Years	77	125.01
	Total	232	
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	3 Years or Less	157	113.22
	More than 3 Years	76	124.82
	Total	233	

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	14.935	1.191	.044	.378	.799
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.275	.834	.539	.372

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.
Chi-Square	.685	5.198	20.607	8.738
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.408	.023	.000	.003

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	1.682	8.988	2.670	.332	3.825
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.195	.003	.102	.564	.051

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	235	1.13	.434	1	4
I have difficulty starting assignments.	235	1.47	.668	1	4
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	235	1.43	.646	1	4
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	235	1.60	.752	1	4
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	235	1.89	.892	1	4
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	234	1.35	.620	1	4
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	235	1.57	.739	1	4
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	234	1.30	.627	1	4
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	233	1.52	.708	1	4
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	234	2.21	.837	1	4
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	233	1.31	.629	1	4
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	234	1.75	.770	1	4
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	234	1.39	.641	1	4
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	233	1.55	.748	1	4
Total Time Deployed	235	1.33	.472	1	2

Ranks			
	Total Time Deployed	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	3 Years or Less	157	111.78
	More than 3 Years	78	130.53
	Total	235	
I have difficulty starting assignments.	3 Years or Less	157	115.07
	More than 3 Years	78	123.89
	Total	235	
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	3 Years or Less	157	117.45
	More than 3 Years	78	119.11
	Total	235	
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	3 Years or Less	157	116.28
	More than 3 Years	78	121.46
	Total	235	
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	3 Years or Less	157	115.38
	More than 3 Years	78	123.28
	Total	235	
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	3 Years or Less	157	115.46
	More than 3 Years	77	121.65
	Total	234	
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	3 Years or Less	157	111.68
	More than 3 Years	78	130.71
	Total	235	
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	3 Years or Less	156	107.13
	More than 3 Years	78	138.24
	Total	234	
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	3 Years or Less	155	108.91
	More than 3 Years	78	133.08
	Total	233	
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	3 Years or Less	156	113.80
	More than 3 Years	78	124.90
	Total	234	
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	3 Years or Less	156	110.15
	More than 3 Years	77	130.87
	Total	233	
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	3 Years or Less	156	112.83
	More than 3 Years	78	126.85
	Total	234	
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	3 Years or Less	156	116.03
	More than 3 Years	78	120.45
	Total	234	
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	3 Years or Less	156	111.68
	More than 3 Years	77	127.79
	Total	233	

Recovery Time

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	.367	3.293
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.545	.070

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	232	1.61	.830	1	3
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	230	2.02	.657	1	3
Total Time Deployed	235	1.33	.472	1	2

Ranks

	Total Time Deployed	N	Mean Rank
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	3 Years or Less	154	114.85
	More than 3 Years	78	119.75
	Total	232	
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	3 Years or Less	152	120.59
	More than 3 Years	78	105.59
	Total	230	

Overall Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.781	.651	5.779	4.258	5.171
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.377	.420	.016	.039	.023

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	8.343	7.715	8.919	9.100	.638
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.004	.005	.003	.003	.425

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Total Time Deployed

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	235	1.89	.320	1	2
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	234	1.83	.373	1	2
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	235	1.68	.467	1	2
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	235	1.26	.442	1	2
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	235	1.94	.245	1	2
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	235	1.68	.469	1	2
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	234	1.75	.433	1	2
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	234	1.28	.449	1	2
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	234	1.48	.501	1	2
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	232	1.77	.421	1	2
Total Time Deployed	235	1.33	.472	1	2

Ranks			
	Total Time Deployed	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	3 Years or Less	157	119.53
	More than 3 Years	78	114.93
	Total	235	
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	3 Years or Less	157	119.11
	More than 3 Years	77	114.21
	Total	234	
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	3 Years or Less	157	124.07
	More than 3 Years	78	105.79
	Total	235	
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	3 Years or Less	157	122.92
	More than 3 Years	78	108.09
	Total	235	
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	3 Years or Less	157	121.01
	More than 3 Years	78	111.94
	Total	235	
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	3 Years or Less	157	125.32
	More than 3 Years	78	103.28
	Total	235	
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	3 Years or Less	156	124.00
	More than 3 Years	78	104.50
	Total	234	
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	3 Years or Less	156	124.75
	More than 3 Years	78	103.00
	Total	234	
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	3 Years or Less	157	125.59
	More than 3 Years	77	101.01
	Total	234	
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	3 Years or Less	155	118.30
	More than 3 Years	77	112.87
	Total	232	

Gender

Combat Experience Types

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	I saw others get severely injured or killed.	I smelled decomposing bodies.	I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	I was sexually assaulted.
Chi-Square	2.769	2.261	9.752	5.499	7.330	.243
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.096	.133	.002	.019	.007	.622

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I was wounded/injured in combat.	I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	I thought I would never survive.	I was responsible for a death.	I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	I saw dead bodies or human remains.
Chi-Square	1.213	3.507	1.775	8.545	1.816	12.250
df	1	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.271	.061	.183	.003	.178	.000

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	I had to handle or uncover human remains.	I was attacked or ambushed.	I experienced an IED explosion near me.
Chi-Square	.395	.757	10.303	10.356
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.530	.384	.001	.001

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	235	1.16	.562	1	4
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	235	2.02	1.076	1	4
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	235	2.54	1.199	1	4
I smelled decomposing bodies.	235	2.22	1.226	1	4
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	235	3.06	1.073	1	4
I was sexually assaulted.	235	1.01	.092	1	2
I was wounded/injured in combat.	235	1.16	.377	1	3
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	235	1.23	.698	1	4
I thought I would never survive.	235	1.70	1.019	1	4
I was responsible for a death.	235	1.88	1.204	1	4
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	235	1.41	.803	1	4
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	235	2.90	1.207	1	4
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	235	1.99	1.136	1	4
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	235	1.79	1.092	1	4
I was attacked or ambushed.	235	2.51	1.289	1	4
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	235	2.41	1.239	1	4
Gender?	232	1.11	.311	1	2

Ranks			
	Gender?	N	Mean Rank
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	Male	207	117.77
	Female	25	106.00
	Total	232	
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	Male	207	118.66
	Female	25	98.60
	Total	232	
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	Male	207	121.09
	Female	25	78.48
	Total	232	
I smelled decomposing bodies.	Male	207	119.88
	Female	25	88.54
	Total	232	
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	Male	207	120.38
	Female	25	84.36
	Total	232	
I was sexually assaulted.	Male	207	116.62
	Female	25	115.50
	Total	232	
I was wounded/injured in combat.	Male	207	117.56
	Female	25	107.74
	Total	232	
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	Male	207	118.07
	Female	25	103.50
	Total	232	
I thought I would never survive.	Male	207	118.24
	Female	25	102.10
	Total	232	
I was responsible for a death.	Male	207	120.38
	Female	25	84.36
	Total	232	
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	Male	207	114.95
	Female	25	129.30
	Total	232	
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	Male	207	121.54
	Female	25	74.76
	Total	232	
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	Male	207	115.62
	Female	25	123.78
	Total	232	
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	Male	207	117.68
	Female	25	106.72
	Total	232	
I was attacked or ambushed.	Male	207	121.17
	Female	25	77.82
	Total	232	
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	Male	207	121.21
	Female	25	77.46
	Total	232	

Classroom Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I am easily startled during class.	I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	I am still on alert for combat when in class.
Chi-Square	.052	2.630	1.070	1.472	.013
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.819	.105	.301	.225	.909

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Classroom discussions anger me.	I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc.) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	I feel irritable.
Chi-Square	3.691	.726	1.210	1.678
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.055	.394	.271	.195

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	I feel emotionally numb.	I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.
Chi-Square	1.036	4.504	1.437	.031	.267
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.309	.034	.231	.861	.605

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
I am easily startled during class.	235	1.31	.480	1	3
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.36	.600	1	4
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	234	1.41	.651	1	4
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	235	1.19	.432	1	3
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	232	1.14	.385	1	3
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	235	1.32	.551	1	4
Classroom discussions anger me.	234	1.54	.668	1	4
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	235	1.29	.524	1	4
I feel irritable.	235	1.68	.707	1	4
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	235	1.53	.712	1	4
I feel emotionally numb.	234	1.50	.782	1	4
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	235	1.33	.715	1	4
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	232	1.34	.575	1	4
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	233	1.09	.307	1	3
Gender?	232	1.11	.311	1	2

Ranks			
	Gender?	N	Mean Rank
I am easily startled during class.	Male	207	116.78
	Female	25	114.20
	Total	232	
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	Male	207	118.50
	Female	25	99.92
	Total	232	
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	Male	206	117.31
	Female	25	105.20
	Total	231	
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	Male	207	117.72
	Female	25	106.42
	Total	232	
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	Male	204	115.10
	Female	25	114.16
	Total	229	
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	Male	207	118.80
	Female	25	97.44
	Total	232	
Classroom discussions anger me.	Male	207	117.65
	Female	25	106.96
	Total	232	
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	Male	207	117.78
	Female	25	105.88
	Total	232	
I feel irritable.	Male	207	118.29
	Female	25	101.66
	Total	232	
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	Male	207	117.87
	Female	25	105.16
	Total	232	
I feel emotionally numb.	Male	206	118.75
	Female	25	93.30
	Total	231	
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	Male	207	117.82
	Female	25	105.60
	Total	232	
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	Male	204	115.21
	Female	25	113.26
	Total	229	
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	Male	205	115.10
	Female	25	118.74
	Total	230	

Assignments, Reading, and Memory

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	I have difficulty starting assignments.	I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	I seem to drift away while reading assignments.
Chi-Square	.084	1.438	.560	.035	1.613
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.772	.231	.454	.852	.204

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.
Chi-Square	.054	1.304	1.748	.005
df	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.816	.253	.186	.942

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.
Chi-Square	.378	.188	.201	.502	.006
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.539	.665	.654	.479	.936

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	235	1.13	.434	1	4
I have difficulty starting assignments.	235	1.47	.668	1	4
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	235	1.43	.646	1	4
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	235	1.60	.752	1	4
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	235	1.89	.892	1	4
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	234	1.35	.620	1	4
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	235	1.57	.739	1	4
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	234	1.30	.627	1	4
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	233	1.52	.708	1	4
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	234	2.21	.837	1	4
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	233	1.31	.629	1	4
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	234	1.75	.770	1	4
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	234	1.39	.641	1	4
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	233	1.55	.748	1	4
Gender?	232	1.11	.311	1	2

Ranks			
	Gender?	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	Male	207	116.73
	Female	25	114.60
	Total	232	
I have difficulty starting assignments.	Male	207	118.08
	Female	25	103.42
	Total	232	
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	Male	207	115.53
	Female	25	124.50
	Total	232	
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	Male	207	116.76
	Female	25	114.38
	Total	232	
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	Male	207	118.33
	Female	25	101.38
	Total	232	
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	Male	206	115.72
	Female	25	118.34
	Total	231	
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	Male	207	118.05
	Female	25	103.68
	Total	232	
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	Male	206	117.49
	Female	25	103.76
	Total	231	
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	Male	206	115.41
	Female	24	116.31
	Total	230	
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	Male	206	116.86
	Female	25	108.94
	Total	231	
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	Male	205	115.99
	Female	25	111.50
	Total	230	
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	Male	206	115.37
	Female	25	121.18
	Total	231	
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	Male	206	115.11
	Female	25	123.34
	Total	231	
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	Male	205	115.61
	Female	25	114.62
	Total	230	

Recovery Time

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.
Chi-Square	.007	.721
df	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.934	.396

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	232	1.61	.830	1	3
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	230	2.02	.657	1	3
Gender?	232	1.11	.311	1	2

Ranks			
	Gender?	N	Mean Rank
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	Male	204	114.89
	Female	25	115.90
	Total	229	
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	Male	203	112.87
	Female	24	123.56
	Total	227	

Overall Effects

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	I feel like I can't relax anymore.	I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Combat has changed the way I view the world.	I have difficulty moving on with my life.
Chi-Square	.359	.297	1.818	.042	.280
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.549	.586	.178	.838	.596

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	My combat experience changed the way I learn.	I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.
Chi-Square	1.818	1.130	.236	.007	.155
df	1	1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.	.178	.288	.627	.931	.694

a. Kruskal-Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender?

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	235	1.89	.320	1	2
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	234	1.83	.373	1	2
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	235	1.68	.467	1	2
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	235	1.26	.442	1	2
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	235	1.94	.245	1	2
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	235	1.68	.469	1	2
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	234	1.75	.433	1	2
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	234	1.28	.449	1	2
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	234	1.48	.501	1	2
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	232	1.77	.421	1	2
Gender?	232	1.11	.311	1	2

Ranks			
	Gender?	N	Mean Rank
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	Male	207	115.99
	Female	25	120.72
	Total	232	
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	Male	207	116.53
	Female	24	111.44
	Total	231	
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	Male	207	114.83
	Female	25	130.30
	Total	232	
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	Male	207	116.26
	Female	25	118.48
	Total	232	
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	Male	207	116.15
	Female	25	119.36
	Total	232	
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	Male	207	114.83
	Female	25	130.30
	Total	232	
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	Male	206	114.78
	Female	25	126.02
	Total	231	
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	Male	206	116.58
	Female	25	111.22
	Total	231	
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	Male	206	115.89
	Female	25	116.94
	Total	231	
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	Male	204	114.56
	Female	25	118.60
	Total	229	

Appendix E - KSU IRB Application

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: IRB Protocol # _____	Application Received: _____
Routed: _____	Training Complete: _____

Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB)

Application for Approval Form

Last revised on January 2011

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION:

- **Title of Project:** (if applicable, use the exact title listed in the grant/contract application)
Out of Combat and Into the Classroom: Affects of Combat Experience on Veterans Participating in Adult Learning

- **Type of Application:**
 - New/Renewal Revision (to a pending new application)
 - Modification (to an existing # _____ approved application)

- **Principal Investigator:** (must be a KSU faculty member)

Name:	Sarah Jane Fishback	Degree/Title:	PhD, Adult and Continuing Education
Department:	Dept of Educational Leadership	Campus Phone:	(785) 532-5554
Campus Address:	354 Bluemont Hall	Fax #:	(785) 532-7304
E-mail	jfishbac@ksu.edu		

- **Contact Name/Email/Phone for Questions/Problems with Form:** Maria L Clark/ maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil / 913-684-7332
Co-investigator

- **Does this project involve any collaborators not part of the faculty/staff at KSU?** (projects with non-KSU collaborators may require additional coordination and approvals):
 - No
 - Yes

- **Project Classification** (Is this project part of one of the following?):
 - Thesis
 - Dissertation
 - Faculty Research
 - Other: _____

Note: Class Projects should use the short form application for class projects.

- **Please attach a copy of the Consent Form:**
 - Copy attached
 - Consent form not used

- **Funding Source:** Internal External (identify source and attach a copy of the sponsor's grant application or contract as submitted to the funding agency)

<input type="checkbox"/> Copy attached <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	
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- **Based upon criteria found in 45 CFR 46 – and the overview of projects that may qualify for exemption explained at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/checklists/decisioncharts.html> , I believe that my project using human subjects should be determined by the IRB to be exempt from IRB review:**
 - No
 - Yes (If yes, please complete application including Section XII. C. 'Exempt Projects'; remember that only the IRB has the authority to determine that a project is exempt from IRB review)

If you have questions, please call the University Research Compliance Office (URCO) at 532-3224, or comply@ksu.edu

Last revised on January 2011

Human Subjects Research Protocol Application Form

The KSU IRB is required by law to ensure that all research involving human subjects is adequately reviewed for specific information and is approved prior to inception of any proposed activity. Consequently, it is important that you answer all questions accurately. If you need help or have questions about how to complete this application, please call the Research Compliance Office at 532-3224, or e-mail us at comply@ksu.edu.

Please provide the requested information in the shaded text boxes. The shaded text boxes are designed to accommodate responses within the body of the application. As you type your answers, the text boxes will expand as needed. After completion, print the form and send the original and one photocopy to the Institutional Review Board, Room 203, Fairchild Hall.

Principal Investigator:	Dr Sarah Jane Fishback
Project Title:	Out of Combat and Into the Classroom: Affects of Combat Experience on Veterans Participating in Adult Learning
Date:	July 10, 2013

MODIFICATION

Is this a modification of an approved protocol? Yes No If yes, please comply with the following:

If you are requesting a modification or a change to an IRB approved protocol, please provide a concise description of all of the changes that you are proposing in the following block. Additionally, please highlight or bold the proposed changes in the body of the protocol where appropriate, so that it is clearly discernable to the IRB reviewers what and where the proposed changes are. This will greatly help the committee and facilitate the review.

NON-TECHNICAL SYNOPSIS (brief narrative description of proposal easily understood by nonscientists):

This research collects data through an online survey. The survey is designed to learn about how combat experiences affects Veterans participating in adult learning. It asks about their combat experiences. The primary research question seeks to describe, "How combat experience affects veteran students in adult learning environments." This is answered by exploring the types of experiences veterans have had since 9/11; how many deployments they have served and the duration of their combat exposure; what affects they have experienced as a result of combat exposure and what difficulties they now experience while participating in educational learning environments; what adult learning skills, abilities, and requirements are hindered by these affects; and finally, what combat veterans want educators to know and understand about their experiences.

I. BACKGROUND (concise narrative review of the literature and basis for the study):

Since 9/11, multiple researchers have sought to learn about the 2.2 million military members who fought in the Global War on Terrorism. Though much has been revealed from multiple studies since 9/11, we still know very little about how combat experiences affect military veterans and their ability to participate in continuing education. Researchers have sought to aid military combat veterans as they transition home and have published their findings in recent years to increase the knowledge of military culture and the impact of their combat experiences. However, no published research could be found that asked specific questions regarding veterans' classroom experiences or difficulties learning and completing assignments.

Combat veterans are unique students in the adult learning community who have a myriad of experiences and unhealed emotional wounds. Those experiences and lingering wounds provide not only a wealth of information that can be tremendously valuable with the learning environment but may also present complicated issues of trust and interactions within that community of learners. To ignore the experiences these veterans have and have brought with them into the learning environment is to violate the most basic foundations of the adult education field. Worse, to ignore the veterans' experiences is to ignore the sacrifices made to secure the very freedom enjoyed in the adult learning environment.

II. PROJECT/STUDY DESCRIPTION (please provide a concise narrative description of the proposed activity in terms that will allow the IRB or other interested parties to clearly understand what it is that you propose to do that involves human subjects. This description must be in enough detail so that IRB members can make an informed decision about proposal).

Using a web-based survey design comprising of mixed quantitative and qualitative questions this study seeks to gain insight effects combat experience and combat trauma with combat experienced veterans. Participants will be invited to participate by receiving an email with a link provided to access the survey. In the privacy of their home, personal computer, iPad, or cellphone they can independently determine their level of participation.

The survey is built and administered using Inquisite, an online survey software owned and managed by Allegiance (www.allegiance.com). This survey system collects data in a secured platform that protects the confidentiality of participants. An email roster is loaded into the system which is automatically converted roster that replaces the email address with a 5-6 digit code. All reports containing participant responses use either the code or no information at all connecting the individual with the email address. There are eight demographic questions; Branch of Service, Type of military service, Amount of time deployed to a combat environment, Number of times deployed to combat, Gender, Level of education, and marital status, and number of children. This is not enough PII to identify any individual. No other PII will be collected and only aggregate information will be used and reported.

The survey is delivered to the invitees through email. The invitation and the survey's opening page will provide information to inform invitees of the research purpose, confidentiality, approximate time needed to complete the survey, risks and benefits for participating, contact information (investigator, co-investigator, and the KSU IRB), a statement informing them of the voluntary nature of the survey and their right to withdraw at any time.

III. OBJECTIVE (briefly state the objective of the research – what you hope to learn from the study):

This research seeks to gain insight into how combat experience changes the learning experience for GWOT military veterans who participate in an educational learning environment. It will explore the types of combat experiences these students bring into that learning environment and how their participation is affected. The data gathered will provide insight into the challenges and the overall difficulties military veterans face while participating in higher education activities after combat. An awareness of these challenges may inform curriculum development and provide faculty and facilitators the understanding necessary to create a learning environment that decreases the negative consequences of combat experience and increasing positive educational experiences. The research has four focuses; 1) Combat Experience, 2) Deployments and Duration of Combat Exposure, 3) Difficulties & Effects, and 4) Educating Educators.

IV. DESIGN AND PROCEDURES (succinctly outline formal plan for study):

- | | |
|---|---|
| A. Location of study: | US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66028 |
| B. Variables to be studied: | Variables include: The Branch of Service (i.e. Army), Type of Service (i.e. National Guard), Amount of time deployed to a combat environment, Number of times deployed to combat (i.e. Operation Enduring Freedom), Gender, Education Level, Marital Status, Children. |
| C. Data collection methods: (surveys, instruments, etc – PLEASE ATTACH) | Online survey delivered through email with a web-link leading to the survey. |
| D. List any factors that might lead to a subject dropping out or withdrawing from a study. These might include, but are not limited to emotional or physical stress, pain, inconvenience, etc.: | Though the survey has been minimized it may experience morbidity from individuals closing the browser prior to completing the survey. There is no anticipated emotional or physical stress or pain associated with participation. However, completing it entirely may prove inconvenient. Survey burnout is possible after 15 minutes of participation. |
| E. List all biological samples taken: (if any) | N/A |

- F. Debriefing procedures for participants: **The last page of the survey will provide an opportunity for the individual to let it be known that he or she wants access to the final results/dissertation.**

V. **RESEARCH SUBJECTS:**

- A. Source: **Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) students and School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP) students.**
- B. Number: **If approved the total invitees will be approximately 1200 (1100 CGSOC and 100 AMSP). If only a sample is approved the number will be approximately 300 students randomly assigned to a sample group.**
- C. Characteristics: (list any unique qualifiers desirable for research subject participation) **Military Veterans with combat experience who are attending adult education.**
- D. Recruitment procedures: (Explain how do you plan to recruit your subjects? Attach any fliers, posters, etc. used in recruitment. If you plan to use any inducements, ie. cash, gifts, prizes, etc., please list them here.) **A roster containing the email addresses of students attending the CGSOC for the 2014 Academic Year will be requested. The email addresses are loaded into the online survey system which sends an email invitation to each individual inviting them to complete the survey by voluntarily clicking the web-link. Thus, individuals will self-select whether or not to participate after receiving the invitation. A roster will also be requested for AMSP students.**

VI. **RISK – PROTECTION – BENEFITS:** The answers for the three questions below are central to human subjects research. You must demonstrate a reasonable balance between anticipated risks to research participants, protection strategies, and anticipated benefits to participants or others.

- A. **Risks for Subjects:** (Identify any reasonably foreseeable physical, psychological, or social risks for participants. State that there are “no known risks” if appropriate.) **there are no known risks.**
- B. **Minimizing Risk:** (Describe specific measures used to minimize or protect subjects from anticipated risks.) **The online survey system automatically replaces the subjects’ names and email addresses with a 5-6 digit code. No report is available that connects the individuals name or email address to the responses.**
- C. **Benefits:** (Describe any reasonably expected benefits for research participants, a class of participants, or to society as a whole.) **While there is no immediate benefit for participating it is the goal that the results will inform adult educators to better meet the needs of the Veteran population attending adult education while suffering effects of their combat experiences.**

In your opinion, does the research involve **more than minimal risk** to subjects? (“Minimal risk” means that “the risks of harm anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.”)

Yes No

VII. **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Confidentiality is the formal treatment of information that an individual has disclosed to you in a relationship of trust and with the expectation that it will not be divulged to others without

permission in ways that are inconsistent with the understanding of the original disclosure. Consequently, it is your responsibility to protect information that you gather from human research subjects in a way that is consistent with your agreement with the volunteer and with their expectations. If possible, it is best if research subjects' identity and linkage to information or data remains unknown.

Explain how you are going to protect confidentiality of research subjects and/or data or records. Include plans for maintaining records after completion.

The Inquisite Survey System allows the researcher to upload an email roster. The system then automatically converts each email and name to a code. When the survey is authenticated the code is used during survey administration to determine which invitees have not completed the survey so that a reminder can be sent. Reports are downloaded from the survey through Microsoft Word, Excel, or into an SPSS file. The email addresses or names of invitees do not appear in any report as they are automatically removed from the data leaving only a code with no way to identify the individual providing a particular response. This provides the highest level of confidentiality. All data is maintained for a minimum of 3 years in a secure, firewalled server that is not accessible by the public or military outside the Quality Assurance Office.

VIII. INFORMED CONSENT: Informed consent is a critical component of human subjects research – it is your responsibility to make sure that any potential subject knows exactly what the project that you are planning is about, and what his/her potential role is. (There may be projects where some forms of “deception” of the subject is necessary for the execution of the study, but it must be carefully justified to and approved by the IRB). A schematic for determining when a waiver or alteration of informed consent may be considered by the IRB is found at

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/consentckls.html>

Even if your proposed activity does qualify for a waiver of informed consent, you must still provide potential participants with basic information that informs them of their rights as subjects, i.e. explanation that the project is research and the purpose of the research, length of study, study procedures, debriefing issues to include anticipated benefits, study and administrative contact information, confidentiality strategy, and the fact that participation is entirely voluntary and can be terminated at any time without penalty, etc. Even if your potential subjects are completely anonymous, you are obliged to provide them (and the IRB) with basic information about your project. See informed consent example on the URCO website. It is a federal requirement to maintain informed consent forms for 3 years after the study completion.

Yes No Answer the following questions about the informed consent procedures.

A. Are you using a written informed consent form? If “yes,” include a copy with this application. If “no” see b.

B. In accordance with guidance in 45 CFR 46, I am requesting a waiver or alteration of informed consent elements (See Section VII above). If “yes,” provide a basis and/or justification for your request.

The research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects, and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context. Due to the online survey system automatically coding each individual there is no ability to connect the individual with their responses. If written consent were sought confidentiality would be at greater risk as that written consent would be the only record linking the subject and the research.

C. Are you using the online Consent Form Template provided by the URCO? If “no,” does your Informed Consent document has all the minimum required elements of informed consent found in the Consent Form Template? (Please explain)

The survey is delivered to the invitees through email. The invitation and the survey's opening page will provide information to inform invitees of the research purpose, the confidentiality, approximate time needed to complete the survey, risks and benefits of participation, a point of contact for questions or concerns, and a statement informing them of the voluntary nature of the survey and their right to withdraw at any time.

- D. Are your research subjects anonymous? If they are anonymous, you will not have access to any information that will allow you to determine the identity of the research subjects in your study, or to link research data to a specific individual in any way. Anonymity is a powerful protection for potential research subjects. (An anonymous subject is one whose identity is unknown even to the researcher, or the data or information collected cannot be linked in any way to a specific person).

The Inquisite Survey System allows the researcher to upload an email roster. The system then automatically converts each email and name to a code. When the survey is authenticated the code is used during survey administration to determine which invitees have not completed the survey so that a reminder can be sent. Reports are downloaded from the survey through Microsoft Word, Excel, or into an SPSS file. The email addresses or names of invitees do not appear in any report as they are automatically removed from the data leaving only a code with no way to identify the individual providing a particular response. This provides the highest level of confidentiality. However, because there is an email roster it is not anonymous.

- E. Are subjects debriefed about the purposes, consequences, and benefits of the research? Debriefing refers to a mechanism for informing the research subjects of the results or conclusions, after the data is collected and analyzed, and the study is over. (If "no" explain why.) Attach copy of debriefing statement to be utilized.

No. If an individual requests the final results/copy of the dissertation and voluntarily provides an email address, it will be sent. Neither the individuals request or email will be used in any other way nor will it be known to anyone that the request was made.

It is possible that the research results will be submitted for publication in a professional journal or other media to inform adult educators about possible effects of military Veterans' combat experiences.

***It is a requirement that you maintain all signed copies of informed consent documents for at least 3 years following the completion of your study. These documents must be available for examination and review by federal compliance officials.**

IX. PROJECT INFORMATION: (If you answer yes to any of the questions below, you should explain them in one of the paragraphs above)

- | Yes | No | Does the project involve any of the following? |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a. Deception of subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | b. Shock or other forms of punishment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | c. Sexually explicit materials or questions about sexual orientation, sexual experience or sexual abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | d. Handling of money or other valuable commodities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | e. Extraction or use of blood, other bodily fluids, or tissues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | f. Questions about any kind of illegal or illicit activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | g. Purposeful creation of anxiety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | h. Any procedure that might be viewed as invasion of privacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | i. Physical exercise or stress |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | j. Administration of substances (food, drugs, etc.) to subjects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | k. Any procedure that might place subjects at risk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | l. Any form of potential abuse; i.e., psychological, physical, sexual |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | m. Is there potential for the data from this project to be published in a journal, presented at a conference, etc? |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | n. Use of surveys or questionnaires for data collection |
- IF YES, PLEASE ATTACH!!**

X. SUBJECT INFORMATION: (If you answer yes to any of the questions below, you should explain them in one of the paragraphs above)

- | Yes | No | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a. Under 18 years of age (these subjects require parental or guardian consent) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | b. Over 65 years of age |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | c. Physically or mentally disabled |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | d. Economically or educationally disadvantaged |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | e. Unable to provide their own legal informed consent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | f. Pregnant females as target population |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | g. Victims |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | h. Subjects in institutions (e.g., prisons, nursing homes, halfway houses) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | i. Are research subjects in this activity students recruited from university classes or volunteer pools? If so, do you have a reasonable alternative(s) to participation as a research subject in your project, i.e., another activity such as writing or reading that would serve to protect students from unfair pressure or coercion to participate in this project? If you answered this question "Yes," explain any <u>alternatives options</u> for class credit for potential human subject volunteers in your study. (It is also important to remember that: Students must be free to choose not to participate in research that they have signed up for at any time without penalty. Communication of their decision can be conveyed in any manner, to include simply not showing up for the research.)
There are no alternatives for completing the research. Students can privately determine their participation in the online survey and may discontinue participation at any time during the survey by closing the web browser. Students who complete the survey will click a "Finish" button to submit their responses. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | j. Are research subjects audio taped? If yes, how do you plan to protect the recorded information and mitigate any additional risks? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | k. Are research subjects' images being recorded (video taped, photographed)? If yes, how do you plan to protect the recorded information and mitigate any additional risks? |

XI. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** Concerns have been growing that financial interests in research may threaten the safety and rights of human research subjects. Financial interests are not in them selves prohibited and may well be appropriate and legitimate. Not all financial interests cause Conflict of Interest (COI) or harm to human subjects. However, to the extent that financial interests may affect the welfare of human subjects in research, IRB's, institutions, and investigators must consider what actions regarding financial interests may be necessary to protect human subjects. Please answer the following questions:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a. Do you or the institution have any proprietary interest in a potential product of this research, including patents, trademarks, copyrights, or licensing agreements? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | b. Do you have an equity interest in the research sponsor (publicly held or a non-publicly held company)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | c. Do you receive significant payments of other sorts, eg., grants, equipment, retainers for consultation and/or honoraria from the sponsor of this research? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | d. Do you receive payment per participant or incentive payments? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | e. If you answered yes on any of the above questions, please provide adequate explanatory information so the IRB can assess any potential COI indicated above. |

XII. PROJECT COLLABORATORS:

A. KSU Collaborators – list anyone affiliated with KSU who is collecting or analyzing data: (list all collaborators on the project, including co-principal investigators, undergraduate and graduate students)

Name:	Department:	Campus Phone:	Campus Email:
Maria L Clark	Dept of Educational Leadership	913-684-7332	maria.lclark.civ@mail.mil

B. Non-KSU Collaborators: (List all collaborators on your human subjects research project not affiliated with KSU in the spaces below. KSU has negotiated an Assurance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), the federal office responsible for oversight of research involving human subjects. When research involving human subjects includes collaborators who are not employees or agents of KSU the activities of those unaffiliated individuals may be covered under the KSU Assurance only in accordance with a formal, written agreement of commitment to relevant human subject protection policies and IRB oversight. The Unaffiliated Investigators Agreement can be found and downloaded at <http://www.k-state.edu/research/comply/irb/forms/Unaffiliated%20Investigator%20Agreement.doc>

C. The URCO must have a copy of the Unaffiliated Investigator Agreement on file for each non-KSU collaborator who is not covered by their own IRB and assurance with OHRP. Consequently, it is critical that you identify non-KSU collaborators, and initiate any coordination and/or approval process early, to minimize delays caused by administrative requirements.)

Name:	Organization:	Phone:	Institutional Email:

Does your non-KSU collaborator’s organization have an Assurance with OHRP? (for Federalwide Assurance and Multiple Project Assurance (MPA) listings of other institutions, please reference the OHRP website under Assurance Information at: <http://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/search>).

No
 Yes If yes, Collaborator’s FWA or MPA # _____

Is your non-KSU collaborator’s IRB reviewing this proposal?

No
 Yes If yes, IRB approval # _____

C. Exempt Projects: 45 CFR 46 identifies six categories of research involving human subjects that may be exempt from IRB review. The categories for exemption are listed here:

<http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/policy/checklists/decisioncharts.html>. If you believe that your project qualifies for exemption, please indicate which exemption category applies (1-6). Please remember that only the IRB can make the final determination whether a project is exempt from IRB review, or not.

Exemption Category: 45 CFR 46.101 (b)(2)

XIII. CLINICAL TRIAL Yes No
 (If so, please give product.)

Export Controls Training:

-The Provost has mandated that all KSU faculty/staff with a full-time appointment participate in the Export Control Program.

-If you are not in our database as having completed the Export Control training, this proposal will not be approved until your participation is verified.

-To complete the Export Control training, follow the instructions below:

Click on:

<http://www.k-state.edu/research/comply/ecp/index.htm>

1. After signing into K-State Online, you will be taken to the Export Control Homepage
2. Read the directions and click on the video link to begin the program
3. Make sure you enter your name / email when prompted so that participation is verified

If you click on the link and are not taken to K-State Online, this means that you have already completed the Export Control training and have been removed from the roster. If this is the case, no further action is required.

-Can't recall if you have completed this training? Contact the URCO at 785-532-3224 or comply@ksu.edu and we will be happy to look it up for you.

Post Approval Monitoring: The URCO has a Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM) program to help assure that activities are performed in accordance with provisions or procedures approved by the IRB. Accordingly, the URCO staff will arrange a PAM visit as appropriate; to assess compliance with approved activities.

If you have questions, please call the University Research Compliance Office (URCO) at 532-3224, or comply@ksu.edu

INVESTIGATOR ASSURANCE FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

(Print this page separately because it requires a signature by the PI.)

P.I. Name: **Dr. Jane Fishback**

Title of Project: **Out of Combat and Into the Classroom: Affects of Combat Experience on Veterans Participating in Adult Learning**

XIV. **ASSURANCES:** As the Principal Investigator on this protocol, I provide assurances for the following:

- A. **Research Involving Human Subjects:** This project will be performed in the manner described in this proposal, and in accordance with the Federalwide Assurance FWA00000865 approved for Kansas State University available at <http://ohrp.osophs.dhhs.gov/polasur.htm#FWA>, applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines. Any proposed deviation or modification from the procedures detailed herein must be submitted to the IRB, and be approved by the Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) prior to implementation.
- B. **Training:** I assure that all personnel working with human subjects described in this protocol are technically competent for the role described for them, and have completed the required IRB training modules found on the URCO website at: <http://www.k-state.edu/research/complv/irb/training/index.htm>. I understand that no proposals will receive final IRB approval until the URCO has documentation of completion of training by all appropriate personnel.
- C. **Extramural Funding:** If funded by an extramural source, I assure that this application accurately reflects all procedures involving human subjects as described in the grant/contract proposal to the funding agency. I also assure that I will notify the IRB/URCO, the KSU PreAward Services, and the funding/contract entity if there are modifications or changes made to the protocol after the initial submission to the funding agency.
- D. **Study Duration:** I understand that it is the responsibility of the Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (IRB) to perform continuing reviews of human subjects research as necessary. I also understand that as continuing reviews are conducted, it is my responsibility to provide timely and accurate review or update information when requested, to include notification of the IRB/URCO when my study is changed or completed.
- E. **Conflict of Interest:** I assure that I have accurately described (in this application) any potential Conflict of Interest that my collaborators, the University, or I may have in association with this proposed research activity.
- F. **Adverse Event Reporting:** I assure that I will promptly report to the IRB / URCO any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others that involve the protocol as approved. Unanticipated or Adverse Event Form is located on the URCO website at: <http://www.k-state.edu/research/complv/irb/forms/index.htm>. In the case of a serious event, the Unanticipated or Adverse Events Form may follow a phone call or email contact with the URCO.
- G. **Accuracy:** I assure that the information herein provided to the Committee for Human Subjects Research is to the best of my knowledge complete and accurate.

(Principal Investigator Signature)

(date)

Appendix F - KSU Approval Letter



TO: Sarah Jane Fishback
Dept of Educational Leadership
354 Bluemont Hall

Proposal Number: 6818

FROM: Rick Scheidt, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 8/30/2013

RE: Proposal Entitled, "Out of Combat and into the Classroom: Affects of Combat Experience on Veterans Participating in Adult Learning"

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects / Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that it is EXEMPT from further IRB review. This exemption applies only to the proposal - as written – and currently on file with the IRB. Any change potentially affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation and may disqualify the proposal from exemption.

Based upon information provided to the IRB, this activity is exempt under the criteria set forth in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, **45 CFR §46.101, paragraph b, category: 2, subsection: ii.**

Certain research is exempt from the requirements of HHS/OHRP regulations. A determination that research is exempt does not imply that investigators have no ethical responsibilities to subjects in such research; it means only that the regulatory requirements related to IRB review, informed consent, and assurance of compliance do not apply to the research.

Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, the University Research Compliance Office, and if the subjects are KSU students, to the Director of the Student Health Center.



Appendix G - Kansas State and CAC LD&E Memorandum of Agreement



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

U.S. ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE
100 STIMSON AVENUE
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027-2301

ATZL-SWA-QA-HPA

10 July 2013

DATE

MEMORANDUM of AGREEMENT

SUBJECT: Non-DoD Supported or Non-DoD Conducted research involving human subjects Institutional Agreement

1. This is a DoD institutional agreement provided by the CAC LD&E in order to approve the conduct of non-exempt research involving human subjects. The CAC LD&E agrees to:

- Support
- Collaborate
- Conduct
- Engage

2. The research for this agreement will be conducted at:

- Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in the Command and General Staff School (CGSS) located at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.
- CGSC in the in the Command and General Staff School (CGSS) located at _____ Satellite campus.
- CGSC in the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS)
- CGSC in the School of Command Prep (SCP)
- CGSC in the School for Advanced Leadership and Tactics (SALT)

3. The Department of Defense (DoD) has specific and unique requirements for research involving DoD Personnel as human subjects. DoD personnel include active duty Military and DoD civilian employees. This agreement verifies the receipt of the document titled DoD, Army Specific and Unique Requirements for Human Research Protections Combined Arms Center (CAC) Leader Development & Education (LD&E) and agreement that the non-DoD Institutional Review Board agrees to verify compliance with these requirements in the conduct of all human subjects research within the CAC LD&E schools and DoD Institutions covered by the CAC LD&E DoD Assurance.

This agreement also verifies all investigators agree to comply with these requirements during the research conduct and in securing all data or other information acquired from

the research participants. The Primary Investigator agrees to the researcher responsibilities provided by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel & Readiness) and has supplied a copy of the signed Researcher Responsibilities to the non-DoD University or Organization.

Kansas State University

University or Non-DoD Organization requesting or reviewing research involving DoD personnel.

Heath Ritter

Primary Contact (Human Protections Administrator, IRB Chair, Exempt Determination Officer)

Kansas State University, 203 Fairchild Hall, Manhattan KS 66506
Address

785-532-3234 ; hlr@ksu.edu
Contact Information (Phone and/or Email)



Non-DoD University or Organization Approving Signature

Dr. Sarah Jane Fishback and Maria L Clark

Primary Investigator (Primary Investigator is obligated to ensure all other researchers or other individuals performing research activities are aware with these requirements and comply)

Sarah Fishback [jfishbac@k-state.edu] and maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil
Primary Investigator Contact Information

Dr. James B Martin, IRB Chair

CAC LD&E Primary Contact (Human Protections Administrator, IRB Chair, Exempt Determination Officer)

james.b.martin.civ@mail.mil 913-684-2946
Contact Information (Phone and/or Email)

Appendix H - CGSC Approval Letter



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE
100 STIMSON AVENUE
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS 66027-2301

ATZL-SWA-QA

16 September 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR: Maria L Clark, KSU Doctoral Candidate

SUBJECT: Proposed Research Protocol – Out of Combat and into the Classroom: How combat experiences affect combat veteran students in adult learning environments

1. This research is being conducted to meet doctoral graduate requirements for Kansas State University. CAC LD&E and Kansas State University signed an agreement for the KSU IRB to act as the reviewing IRB. Your research has been reviewed and approved by the KSU IRB. The LD&E/CGSC IRB concurs with its findings.
2. Your request to administer a survey to CGSOC AY2013-02 and AY2014-01 students is:

- Approved
- Denied (see below)
- Approved with Conditions (see below)

- a. Your survey will administered using the Inquisite Survey System provided in the CGSC Quality Assurance Office (QAO). The Inquisite Survey System automatically codes participants for confidentiality and removes personally identifying information from the data collected. Thus, waiver of documented informed consent is granted.
 - b. The DoD Unique Requirements are agreed to by the researcher and the KSU IRB and returned to the LD&E HPA.
 - c. The Researcher Requirements is signed by the researcher and returned to the LD&E HPA.
3. Should you have questions concerning the above, please contact Dr. James B. Martin, IRB Chair in the CGSC Dean of Academics Department, room 4507 Lewis & Clark, james.b.martin1.cov@mail.mil, 913-684-2946.
 4. You must submit a closure report upon completion of your research.

Dr. James B Martin
IRB Chair
100 Stimson Ave. L&C, Rm 4507
Ft Leavenworth, KS 66207-2301

Appendix I - Combat Experience in the Classroom (2013) Pilot Survey

Out of Combat and Into the Classroom

How combat experiences affect combat experienced students

This survey seeks to learn how your combat experience affect your participation while attending educational classes and completing assignments. The results will be used to complete a PhD dissertation to inform the adult education field and to satisfy the requirements for completing a PhD in Adult Education through Kansas State University. The results will also be provided to CGSC leadership and faculty. **Your participation and support is greatly appreciated.**

The survey is **voluntary** and should take about **15 minutes** of your time. You may stop participating at any time by closing the web browser. You will receive 1-2 reminders until you both complete the survey and click finish or the survey has ended.

Survey responses are **confidential**. The survey system removes the email address from survey responses so the identity of the responder cannot be determined.

Should you have questions about the survey or the ability to access and complete it, please contact maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil. If you have concerns about the survey content or manner in which it was made available, please contact the Kansas State University IRB at k-state.edu/research/comply.

This survey has been reviewed and approved by the CGSC Quality Assurance Office. The survey control number is 13-09-094

Page 1 ▾

Next

Save

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POWERED BY
 ALLEGIANCE

What is your branch of service?

- Army
- Air Force
- Marine
- Navy
- Coast Guard
- International Student
- Other

Your type of Service:

- Regular Military
- Reserve Military
- National Guard

Gender?

- Male
- Female

Overall, since 2001, how much time did you spend deployed to a combat environment?

- Less than one year
- 1-3 years total
- More than 3 years but less than 5 years
- 5 years or more

Please select how many times you have deployed since 2001.	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four or More
I deployed to an Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) assignment:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I deployed to an Operation Iraqi (OIF) Freedom assignment:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I deployed to an Operation New Dawn (OND) assignment:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I deployed to another dangerous duty assignment:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To learn how your combat experiences affect your education experiences an understanding of your combat experiences is important. Please check off all that apply in the list of significant combat experiences.	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-4)	Several times (5+)
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I saw a friend get severely wounded or killed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I witnessed a serious injury or death.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I smelled decomposing bodies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was sexually assaulted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was wounded/injured in combat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I thought I would never survive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was responsible for a death.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was attacked or ambushed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I conducted combat patrols or other dangerous duty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If a significant combat experience you had, is not listed please use this space list your experiences.

Below is a list of problems and complaints that veterans may have in response to stressful combat experiences. Please read each one and select the answer that indicates how much you have been bothered by that problem while attending class.

	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
I am easily startled during class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am easily distracted during class by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Something triggers me while in class that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom discussions anger me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have physical reactions in class (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel irritable when in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have physical reactions in class simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel emotionally numb while sitting in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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To determine how often your combat experiences affect your assignment experiences, please read the statements below and select how often you experience each one.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	All the time
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty starting assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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How have your combat experiences affected your memory? To determine how your combat experiences affect your memory, please read the statements below and select how often you experience each.	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The last three pages of this survey provided several ways your combat experiences may affect your classroom participation, your assignments, and your memory. If there are other affects not mentioned, please share them.

When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?

- A few minutes
- Up to an hour
- A few hours
- More than a day

When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what can you do that helps? (i.e. take a walk or a break)

Select true or false:	True	False
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Overall, please determine if the following statements are true or false for you as a result of your combat experiences.	True	Unsure	False
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The goal of this survey research is to help educators better understand what students might be experiencing as a result of their combat experiences and what their needs are. Whether just a few minutes to get up out of class is helpful or if extra time to complete assignments is needed, this research is designed to let educators know what they need to be aware of or consider. With that in mind please write what you believe they should be aware of and consider.

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THANK YOU for your service to our country.
Thank you for the commitment you made to our freedom and the sacrifices you have experienced.

Thank you for participating in this survey.
I will do my best to honor you.

Please hit the **'finish'** button to submit your responses.

If you would like to receive a copy of the final research results please send your request to: maria.clark1@us.army.mil

If you would like to talk with someone about your combat experiences or help others talk about theirs please call:

Family Life Center 913-684-8995
Staff Duty Officer 913-684-4448 or 4154 after hours
Garrisonsn Chaplain's Office 913-684-2210
Munson Army Health Clinic 913-684-6000
Behavioral Health Social Work Services 913-684-6771/6772
VA Health Care Center 913-682-2000
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1 (800) 273-TALK (8255)

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Appendix J - Out of Combat and Into the Classroom (2013) Survey

Out of Combat and Into the Classroom

How combat experiences affect combat experienced students

This survey seeks to learn how combat experience affects your participation while attending educational classes and completing assignments. The results will be used to complete a PhD dissertation to increase the adult education field knowledge and to satisfy the requirements for completing a PhD in Adult Education through Kansas State University. The results will also be provided to CGSC leadership and faculty. **Your participation and support is greatly appreciated.**

The survey is **voluntary** and should take about **15 minutes** of your time. You may stop participating at any time by closing the web browser. You will receive 1-2 reminders until you both complete the survey and click finish or the survey has ended.

Survey responses are **confidential**. The survey system removes the email address from survey responses so the identity of the responder cannot be determined.

Should you have questions about the survey or the ability to access and complete it, please contact maria.l.clark.civ@mail.mil. If you have concerns about the survey content or manner in which it was made available, please contact the Kansas State University IRB at k-state.edu/research/comply.

This survey has been reviewed and approved by the CGSC Quality Assurance Office. The survey control number is 13-09-094

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What is your branch of service?

- Army
- Air Force
- Marine
- Navy
- Coast Guard

Your type of Service:

- Regular Military
- Reserve Military
- National Guard

Gender?

- Male
- Female

Overall, since 2001, how much time did you spend deployed to a combat environment?

- Less than one year
- 1-3 years total
- More than 3 years but less than 5 years
- 5 years or more

Please select how many times you have deployed since 2001.	Zero	One	Two	Three or More
I deployed to an Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) assignment:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I deployed to an Operation Iraqi (OIF) Freedom assignment:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I deployed to an Operation New Dawn (OND) assignment:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I deployed to another dangerous duty assignment:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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To learn how your combat experiences affect your education experiences an understanding of your combat experiences is important. Please check off all that apply in the list of significant combat experiences.	Zero times	Once	A few times (2-3)	Several times (4+)
I engaged in hand-to-hand combat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I witnessed a friend become a casualty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I saw others get severely injured or killed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I smelled decomposing bodies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced a nearby explosion that could be physically felt.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was sexually assaulted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was wounded/injured in combat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I witnessed brutality toward detainees/prisoners.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I thought I would never survive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was responsible for a death.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt betrayed by someone in my unit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I saw dead bodies or human remains.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There were times during my combat deployment when I felt powerless.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had to handle or uncover human remains.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was attacked or ambushed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced an IED explosion near me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If a significant combat experience you had, is not listed please use this space list your experiences.

Below is a list of problems and complaints that veterans may have in response to stressful combat experiences. Please read each one and select the answer that indicates how much you have been bothered by that problem while attending class.	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I am easily startled during class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am easily distracted by thoughts of a stressful combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel distant or cut off from classmates.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Something triggers me that makes me feel as if a stressful combat experience is happening again (as if you were reliving it).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am still on alert for combat when in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have disturbing memories of a stressful combat experience while in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom discussions anger me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have physical reactions (shaking, heart pounding, etc) when something reminds me of a stressful combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel irritable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have physical reactions simply because something got me wound up (i.e. traffic, something wouldn't work, an earlier argument).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel emotionally numb.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am tired in class due to sleep difficulties caused by my combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am uncomfortable when I am in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I avoid class activities/situations because they remind me of a stressful combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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To determine how often your combat experiences affect your assignment experiences, please read the statements below and select how often you experience each one.	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
My combat experiences affect my ability to complete assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty starting assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel anxiety when working on assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have trouble concentrating on assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I seem to drift away while reading assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Though I know what to do, I can't seem to do it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I allow distractions to interfere with completing assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My combat experiences change how well I accomplish assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I catch myself thinking about my combat experiences while working on assignments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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To determine how your combat experiences affect your memory, please read the statements below and select how often you experience each.	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
I have to read information more than once to remember what was read.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My combat experience negatively affects my ability to remember what I read.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty remembering what was taught in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty remembering how to complete an assignment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty remembering when assignments are due.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The last three pages of this survey provided several ways your combat experiences may affect your classroom participation, your assignments, and your memory. If there are other affects not mentioned, please share them.

When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional difficulties, what is the maximum time it has taken to return to normal?

- A few minutes
- Up to an hour
- A few hours
- More than a day

When something happens that causes you to have physical or emotional reactions, what can you do that helps? (i.e. take a walk or a break)

Select true or false:	True	False	N/A
The amount of time it takes varies depending on the trigger.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sometimes I feel like I will never be normal again.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Overall, please determine if the following statements are true or false for you as a result of your combat experiences.	True	False
My combat experiences now interfere with my participation in education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel like I can't relax anymore.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have experienced flashbacks of a traumatic combat experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Combat has changed the way I view the world.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have difficulty moving on with my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My combat experience changed the way I learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get angry about what happened during my combat experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am a different person than I was prior to combat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My deployments increased my personal stress levels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are times when it feels like I am watching my life from the inside rather than fully participating in it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The goal of this survey research is to help educators better understand what students might be experiencing as a result of their combat experiences and what their needs are. Whether just a few minutes to get up out of class is helpful or if extra time to complete assignments is needed, this research is designed to let educators know what they need to be aware of or consider. With that in mind please write what you believe they should be aware of and consider.

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THANK YOU for your service to our country.
Thank you for the commitment you made to our freedom and the sacrifices you have experienced.

Thank you for participating in this survey.
I will do my best to honor you.

Please hit the 'finish' button to submit your responses.

If you would like to receive a copy of the final research results please send your request to: maria.clark1@us.army.mil

If you would like to talk with someone about your combat experiences or help others talk about theirs please call:

Family Life Center 913-684-8995
Staff Duty Officer 913-684-4448 or 4154 after hours
Garrison Chaplain's Office 913-684-2210
Munson Army Health Clinic 913-684-6000
Behavioral Health Social Work Services 913-684-6771/6772
VA Health Care Center 913-682-2000
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1 (800) 273-TALK (8255)

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