



**PRESS RELEASE: 'Patriot Express' to Accelerate Time -to-Graduation for Veterans in Criminal Justice**

**Sandy C Gholston** to: Archive

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Included below is a press release regarding the "Patriot Express" program designed to help veterans attending Ferris State University successfully and more quickly pursue a Criminal Justice degree. Any questions about this release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.

To read the online version of this story, visit:

<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2012/october/patriot.htm>

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Sandy Gholston  
Ferris State University  
News Services and Social Media Manager  
sandygholston@ferris.edu, (231) 591-2021

**'Patriot Express' to Accelerate Time-to-Graduation for Veterans in Criminal Justice**

BIG RAPIDS – Veterans who attend Ferris State University to pursue a Criminal Justice degree have the opportunity to graduate early under the new “Patriot Express” program. The program will start next fall with a cohort of 12 to 15 veterans, who are current or incoming students.

“The purpose of the program is to reduce the time veterans spend at Ferris in pursuit of a degree,” said Mischelle Stone, an associate professor in the Criminal Justice program who proposed the “Patriot Express.” “They can make use of their military education, training and experience to cut the time it takes to complete their bachelor’s degree.”

The program will include traditional course work but also will offer comparable work-life experience credit, independent study and online courses. Participants will graduate in 30 months instead of 48.

The accelerated degree requires a high amount of dedication and self-discipline, Stone said, but she believes veterans’ experiences give them those capabilities.

“The program allows veterans and Ferris to capitalize on their strengths as disciplined, mature adults who are ‘mission-driven’ and self-sufficient,” Stone said. “It also helps us to keep them engaged in the learning process and to reduce the possibility of them leaving the university without their degree.”

Stone devised the program after respectful, driven veterans in her classes appeared “checked out” of the classroom-learning process, she said.

“I thought it was a good idea, because veterans have a much more global perspective than many

traditional students have, and their military experiences have required that they be highly goal-oriented and mission-driven,” Stone said.

Steps required for admission into the “Patriot Express” program are still being developed. The first students to test the program will begin their course work with the Fall 2013 semester and have an anticipated graduation date of December 2015.

The program is funded through the Provost’s Office. To qualify, veterans need Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) or Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) designation on their military discharge papers.

For more information, contact Stone at (231) 591-3782 or [MischelleStone@ferris.edu](mailto:MischelleStone@ferris.edu).

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Sandy Gholston  
News Services and Social Media Manager  
Ferris State University  
420 Oak Street  
Prakken Building 108  
Phone: (231) 591-2021  
News Services Web site: [www.ferris.edu/news](http://www.ferris.edu/news)  
Ferris State University News Blog: [ferrisstatebulldogs.blogspot.com/](http://ferrisstatebulldogs.blogspot.com/)

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