Veterans in college

This sidebar accompanied a feature story about two UW-Eau Claire students who are veterans.

The number of veterans in the UW System has ballooned in the past decade, roughly doubling from 2,439 in the 2002-03 academic year to 5,060 in the current year. During that time the number of veterans has grown from 133 to 220 at UW-Eau Claire and 124 to 319 at UW-Stout.

Because different individuals qualify for different benefits, it is difficult to obtain definitive statistics on the number of veterans — and female veterans — on campus. At UW-Eau Claire 250 individuals — including veterans, spouses and dependents — use federal veterans benefits, while about 160 use state benefits, military education benefits coordinator Miranda Cross-Schindler said.

There is some overlap between the two groups, so she estimates about 300 to 350 people on campus are using veterans benefits.

About one-quarter of them are female, compared with 14 percent of the armed forces, although some of those receiving benefits are wives and daughters of vets.