Program Name: Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center (VROC)
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Academic Year: 2023-2024
Status: Submitted
Updated on: 9/29/2023

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS PROGRAM REVIEW FOR?

The goal of program review is to assess how well our programs are doing. Program review asks us to:
- Reflect on the state of student learning or support in our disciplines and programs, by discussing:
  - efforts to achieve equity across student populations and modes of delivery;
  - results of assessment activities aimed at improving or researching student learning;
  - new challenges or changes to the program.
- Identify resources that we need to change and improve.

Though program review is tied to accreditation, ultimately, we want program review to be meaningful for us. This means we want to use program review to highlight and celebrate what is working, identify what isn't and to figure out what we can do about it. Program review also provides an opportunity to assess how those things work in practice, and work to improve our practices to be able to serve our students even better. It also serves to create cross-campus understanding and dialogue and make more informed decisions in our teaching and programs. Program review is also an opportunity to advocate for change and for resources by showing need and equity issues that we need additional support to be able to address.

1. Description of Program (200-400 words)

College of San Mateo's Veterans Services supports the overall college mission and values by providing a variety of support services targeting all military affiliated students within an equity lens that prioritizes academics, facilitating access to basic needs and by assisting military affiliated students in transitioning into our campus community. Our primary services include CSM admissions and matriculation assistance, applying for the Federal Application for Free Student Aid (FAFSA), accessing GI Bill® education benefits, academic counseling and various referrals to on campus resources such as financial aid, health services, mental health services, financial literacy services and student life. The VROC serves as a "one-stop" resource center that facilitates the administration process for our student veterans to develop and strengthen our services, support programs and increase student access and success by serving an information focal point for our students. We continue to partner with off campus agencies and resources such as the Veteran Affairs Department, San Mateo County Veteran Service Office, physical and mental health agencies, and other professional veteran associations to provide a more well-rounded experience.

The CSM VROC currently adheres to federal initiatives by the Department of Education and the Department of Veteran Affairs. The DoE's 8 Keys to Veterans' Success initiative and the Obama Administration's Principles of Excellence (Executive Order 13607, April 27, 2012)

guidelines where the program aggresses to commit and provide our student veterans, service members, veteran spouses and other family members meaningful information regarding their benefits and academic and financial options to enroll in higher education. On January 5, 2021 The Department of Veteran Affairs enacted the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020. The law will have a transformative effect on the mission of Education Service to provide ready access to, and timely and accurate delivery of, education benefits to Veterans, Service members, and their families, as well as further enable VA to empower GI Bill® beneficiaries to achieve their vocational and career goals. Our center also offers support to our military-connected students by adhering so the legislative mandates such as AB705 (Student Placement), SB893 (CA College Promise), AB540 (Non-resident tuition) and the implementation of the Student Success Link (SSL).

2. <u>Results of Previous Program Review (200-500 words)</u>
   a) Describe the results of your previous Program Review's action plan and identified equity gaps.
       *   Previous Goals
       *   Results Achieved
       *   Changes Implemented
       *   Plans still in progress
       *   Any notable or surprising results and outcomes

The result from our previous program review have been mixed. Out of the three initiatives (listed below)

2021/22 Goal	Original Description	Changes Implemented	Progress	Surprising Results/Outcome
VROC Pathfinders Program	Form a student, peer-to-peer worker group (2 students) to assist in enrollment and retention.	Instead of hiring specific students, VROC aligned these duties with our work study program to assign student ambassador roles (ie. SparkPoint, Financial Aid, Wellness).	It's currently an on-going project but we have assigned our work study student this semester.	The change occurred when we were able to add more students into this program that our original 2 slots. Currently, we are on track to have 6 ambassadors to assist with program/resource access and our overall retention efforts. The goal is to have a veteran peer network to represent our student support offices.
Veterans Online Orientation	Create a veteran specific online orientation to address more specific transition information.	We originally started with the idea of adding a Veterans Slide to the current online orientation. After discussing with our colleagues	Ongoing	Although there is a need for a veteran specific orientation. We are currently working with our new administrators and counterparts at Cañada and Skyline

		at our sister colleges, it would make more sense to combine our efforts aim to have a unique veteran orientation.		College VROC's to standardize how this orientation would look like and how it would be delivered.
Implementation of Veterans CRM (Student Success Link)	Create a veterans/G.I. Bill specific track on the SSL to allow students to submit their documentation.	We have worked with District CRM team to build out our core benefit document submission pathway.	Main component is completed. We are working on updating certain segments.	Although we have the main items competed. We have been in progress on other items based on changes to District and VA policies. Most notably: changes to transcript evaluation, addition of the Join Service Transcript requirement and the elimination of the DD214 form.

3. Current Program Review (200-400 words)

Please use the statistics below, which are college-wide, as a reference. Please refer to the Program Review website for individual program data.

College Stats 2022-23	Ethnicity	First Gen	Age	Gender	Total
Headcount (unduplicated)	Latinx 32% White 26% Asian 20% Filipino 7% Multiracial 7% Black 3% Pacific Islander 2% Unknown 3% Native American 0%	45% of our students are the first in their family to go to college.	66% 24 yrs. and under 18% Ages 25-34 17% over 35 yrs.	49% Female 48% Male 3% Non-disclosed or non-binary	13,180 students
Enrollments (duplicated)	Latinx 35% White 26% Asian 16% Filipino 6% Multiracial 8% Black 3% Pacific Islander 3% Unknown 3% Native American 0%	47% of enrollments were by students who are the first in their family to go to college.	76% 24 yrs. and under 13% Ages 25-34 11% over 35 yrs.	48% Female 50% Male 2% Non-disclosed or non-binary	37,014 enrollments

CSM Veterans (GI Bill students)	Latinx 30.9% White 24.9% Asian 10.5% Filipino 11.0% Multiracial 8.8% Black 9.4% Pacific Islander 2.2% Unknown 1.7% Native American 0.6%	54.1% of our students are the first in their family to go to college	19 or less: 1.3% 20-24: 17.9% 25-29: 31.4% 30-34: 21.2% 35-39: 15.4% 40-49: 8.3% 50+: 4.5	16.6% Female 81.2% Male 2.2% Non-disclosed or non-binary	181 Veterans Students

YEAR	VETERAN/ACTIVE DUTY/RESERVE	G.I. BILL/V.A. BENEFIT	MILITARY CONNECTED COMMUNITY
	Total number of student veterans/active duty/reserve (1st level of retention)	Student veterans/active duty/reserve that are using a V.A. benefits	Total number of students under our umbrella. (vets, active duty, reserve, dependents, children, spouses, etc).
2021-22	175	165	398
2022-23	207	181	415

a) ***Student population equity:*** *Discuss any gaps in student success, persistence, satisfaction, utilization or enrollment across student populations (statistics provided for ethnicity, first-generation, age, gender and total enrollment), or student population served.*

Findings: Since the last program review, there has been a change in how we request information from our PRIE Office and how we analyze that information to better supplement our department programming. We have been able to work together to identify exactly the student population sub-sects that have informed our programming. For example, during the 2022-23 academic year, our entire military-connected community was 415 students. Out of that number, we identified 207 veterans; and out of that number we identified that 181 were utilizing the G.I. Bill or another V.A. benefit. This breakdown was crucial in helping us know exactly who our veterans are and which ones were using V.A. benefits because those are the students where we could focus our communication and retention efforts to keep them on track with their educational goals, direct our counseling efforts to develop SEP's for priority registration.

The success of this data finding has now led us to better see who our student veterans are (demographic data) and work more with our PRIE office to generate a comprehensive yearly student veteran needs assessment survey. This will be important because we will be able to gather information from the shifting experiences within the student veteran community. For example, in 2019, we had 50% percent of all our veterans serve in a conflict zone around the world (Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, etc.). That number has drastically decreased which has informed our programming by shifting some focus more into actual college transition services that centers around the 1st year college experience where before we focused on

wellness/mental health services and connecting those students to their heath care benefits. We would still connect our veterans to those services but since the shift in our students' experience has changed to non-combat experiences, we now see a greater demand for that 1st year college experience support, retention and persistence efforts.

a) ***Modes of Delivery equity:*** *Discuss any gaps in student success, persistence, satisfaction, utilization or enrollment, and student population served across different delivery modes. Please comment on in person services/instruction vs hybrid services options/instruction vs completely online services/instruction.*

Since the last program review, we have explored what a more equitable mode of service can look like in a student support center like ours. The changes in class modality has impacted how we deliver information. Although there is a push to have students enroll in in-person courses due to VA requirements, our students usually take a mix of online courses due to their family or work schedules and if they live outside the county. We also saw a change in our demographics since last cycle where we have seen an increase in female veterans. Although 16.6% does not seem like a big number as compared to our overall CSM breakdown, it is in increase in our community which has led to a better reflection in our programming to address those changes.

Changes since last Program Review	Analysis of Gaps	Plans to Address Opportunity Gaps
1. **Need of an additional space.**	Our student veteran enrollment numbers have been increasing each of the last 5 terms. The rotation of our academic and personal counselor has reached its capacity and has now impacted the access for our students. In addition, we have added a full-time A/R III position for benefit certification that needs the space in the VROC. Also, since our personal counselor meets students for wellness counseling, it could be a HIPPA violation to see who walks in for these meetings in our center.	Currently, we have 1 counseling office split amongst 2 counselors. With the addition of our full-time A/R III position, we will need additional space to house our staff/faculty. The college and district have emphasized a strategy to increase enrollment but the resources and office space must match that same effort, so VROC seeks to add an additional office space to better serve our students. Hopefully, requesting additional space for our program can resolve this issue by providing our academic and personal counselor with appropriate office spaces.
2. **Hired an A/R III to have a dedicated staff member processing V.A. education benefits.**	We had a very difficult time processing student's benefits during Summer 2021 through Fall 2022. We depended on another department to assign staff hours to our process and this had a negative impact that harmed our veteran enrollment, processing times, students	We did hire a full time A/R III staff member who will be our dedicated staff member that will process VA benefits. This will help our program tremendously in assisting our student access their benefits, retain the students who are enrolled and provide a more consistent presence in the VROC for office hours and communication with our students.

	access to their benefits and overall trust with our department.	
3. **Addition of Women Veterans Support Group**	Since we have seen an increase on our women veteran's population, we have strategically teamed up with the VA Palo Alto Health Care System to form a Women Veterans Support Group. The aim of this support group is to have a space and resources specifically for our women veterans. The goal is to develop a support group for peer-to-peer support, highlight their college and military experience, create access to women-specific health care needs through the VA and to expand leadership opportunities.	This support group aims to connect women veterans around campus with a social space and connection to leadership opportunities. The opportunity here is to have a sustainable and consistent partnership between VA Palo Alto and the three veteran centers across the district to standardize this support group and allow the women veterans across the three campuses be able to participate in the group.

*(c) **Challenges and Opportunities:** Describe any **other** particular challenges, opportunities, or other factors that impact the success of your program (e.g., natural or health disasters, assessing whether a degree program is meeting its learning outcomes, developing new degree programs or courses, adapting to a changing student population, keeping a flagging program alive, starting a learning community, resources, etc.).*

4. Planning

a) **Discipline-level and SLO (Student Learning Outcomes) assessment/Student Services and SAO (Service Area Outcomes) assessment for 2023-2025:** Describe learning or area assessment plans for this Program Review cycle, **including any activities planned to address equity or delivery mode gaps**. Your summary should explain:

- SLO/SAO
  - What will your assessment focus on?
  - Is it discipline/program/service-specific or will it be interdisciplinary/a collaboration between programs or services?
  - Why is it prioritized (e.g., equity issue, key disciplinary issue, etc.)?
- Assessment plan
  - What is the planned activity or intervention?
  - Describe next steps and the timeline for your SLO/SAO assessment
- Resources for SLO/SAO assessment

o What resources will you need to assess changes (i.e., PRIE support in the form of specific data, surveys, etc.)?

SLOs/SAOs	Assessment Plan	Resources for SLO/SAO assessment
1. Current: 90% of military affiliated students will be satisfied with the services and resources at the VROC.	Work with our PRIE department to create a student veteran needs assessment survey and issue the survey every Spring.	PRIE developed student assessment survey.
2. Additional: Increase the number of veterans applying for Financial Aid (FAFSA).	Schedule veteran specific FAFSA/Financial Aid workshops and track participants, FAFSA application and who completed the financial aid process.	Connect with Financial Aid Office to build a stronger relationship and conduct workshop trainings for our student workers.

b) *Program Goals*

Based on your current review of your program's equity gaps, learning assessments and challenges and opportunities, identify specific goals and plans. Please note that whereas SLOs/SAOs involve assessing and measuring a specific skill or knowledge students will be able to do/understand upon successful completion of a course, program, service, and/or degree/certificate, program goals reflect overall aspects of your program or service you hope to improve.

Please note that closing equity gaps is a College-wide priority. If there are significant equity gaps in student success, persistence, satisfaction, utilization or enrollment, and student population served in your program, these should be addressed in at least one of your goals (see 3a and 3b).

For each goal, you should include:

- A brief description of the issue being addressed (equity gap, etc.)
- What actions you plan to take
- What measurable outcomes you hope to achieve
- A timeline
- Who is responsible
- What support do you anticipate needing in order to achieve your goals and plans, including:
  - Professional development activities
  - Institutional support
  - Collaborations
  - Training
  - Resources

Goal	Actions	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline	Responsible Party	Support Needed
1. **Develop a veteran's specific retention strategy.**	VROC PSC part of the college's Leading From the Middle (LFM) Cohort that aims to develop a college-wide retention strategy.	Collaborate with other student support programs to develop the strategy and identify specific areas that can improve retention (student support groups, FAFSA, a retention specialist position).	May 2024	Luis Padilla	In conjunction with Leading From the Middle (LFM) group. We will develop a retention strategy.
2. **Establish the CSM Bulldog Battalion (Veteran health/wellness support group**)	Develop a student support/wellness group that aims to provide a casual space and build a sense of community.	This group will be led by VROC PSC and our Veterans Personal Counselor. We will count student interactions, increase personal counseling services and activities.	December 2023	Luis Padilla and Daniel Rhyne	Collaboration between VROC and Health & Wellness Center.
3. **Update Veteran Program Communication Platforms: website, SSL, documents, etc**.	Update website and all communication regarding the program.	Create new checklists, welcome packets and marketing materials for students and community use.	December 2023	Luis Padilla	CSM Marketing and Communications Department.
4. **Build a Veterans College 1 Experience**	Look into developing a Veterans College 1 experience that will assist new, first-time college students in making a successful transition to college life.	Build a College 1 course for Fall 2024.	May 2024	Luis Padilla	Counseling and Administration for developing structure and approval.

5. CE Only

a) Review the program's available labor market data, as applicable, and explain how the program meets a documented labor market demand. Here are two relevant links:

- [State of California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division](#) (the official source for California Labor Market Information):
- [Employment data](#) (by Program Top Code) from the State Chancellor's Office

b) Summarize student outcomes in terms of degrees and certificates. Identify areas of accomplishments and areas of concern.

c) Review and update the program's Advisory Committee information. Provide the date of most recent advisory committee meeting and outcomes of the meeting (updates, changes, new members, etc.).

d) What strategies have you discussed in your recent Advisory Committee's meetings to meet the needs and challenges of getting people retrained and back to work?