

College of San Mateo

# **Program Review Report - Student Services, Learning Communities, & Learning Support Centers**

Student Services - STSV - Veterans Services

## I. PROGRAM CONTEXT

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### **Mission (100 word limit)**

#### **1. How does your program align with the College and District mission? (100 word limit)**

The Veterans Services Program at College of San Mateo aligns with the College and District Mission by fostering access, inclusion, and equitable outcomes for military-affiliated students. Through comprehensive academic, personal, and wellness support, the program empowers veterans to realize their full potential and achieve educational and career goals. By facilitating enrollment, benefit certification, and referrals to campus and community resources, Veterans Services promotes academic excellence, community engagement, and student success. Collaborative partnerships and a welcoming environment reflect the College's commitment to diversity, shared responsibility, and continuous improvement in serving the community's educational and human development needs.

#### **2. Program Description (500 word limit)**

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, facilitate access to basic needs, and by assisting military-affiliated students in transitioning into our campus community through wellness and resource-oriented programming and fostering relationships and collaboration. Our primary services include CSM enrollment and matriculation assistance, access to timely and accurate delivery of education benefits GI Bill® and other Veteran Affairs (VA) education benefits, state-funded veteran, spouse, and dependent services; academic counseling, personal counseling, a physical space to study, community-build, rest, and refuel; and various referrals to on-campus resources such as financial aid, health services, disability resources, mental health services, career counseling, financial literacy and basic needs services, student life, and affinity groups and communities. The VROC serves as a wraparound 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 providing necessary information to our students. We continue to partner with off-campus agencies and resources such as Veteran Affairs (education, housing, employment, healthcare, and Vet Center), San Mateo County Veteran Service Office, various health agencies, employment and training organizations, and other professional veteran associations to provide a holistic experience.

### **Program Service**

#### **3.A. How many students are served by your program?**

Fall 2023 to Spring 2024: 623

Fall 2024 to Spring 2025: 603

2024 calendar year: 214 CSM home campus students certified for VA education benefits

#### **3.B. How does your program intentionally serve underrepresented, disproportionately impacted or racially minoritized students (ie. Black and/or Indigenous People of Color; Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer,**

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**Intersex, and Asexual; 1st Gen; Foster; Homeless; Undocumented; Veteran; Low-Income; or other disproportionately impacted student populations identified in our Student Equity data, etc.)?**



**VETERAN CENTER PROGRAM REVIEW**

Fall 2023 to Spring 2024

Race/Ethnicity	Headcount	Pct
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	0.2%
Asian	55	8.8%
Black - Non-Hispanic	39	6.3%
Filipino	72	11.6%
Hispanic	193	31.0%
Pacific Islander	9	1.4%
White Non-Hispanic	171	27.4%
Multiraces	69	11.1%
Unknown	14	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>623</b>	

Gender	Headcount	Pct
Female	190	30.5%
Male	409	65.7%
Unreported	24	3.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>623</b>	

Disability	Headcount	Pct
Has Disability	49	7.9%
No Disability	578	92.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>623</b>	

First Generation College	Headcount	Pct
First Generation	310	49.8%
Not First Generation	268	43.0%
Unreported	45	7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>623</b>	

Low Income	Headcount	Pct
Low Income Student	133	21.3%
Not Low Income	495	79.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>623</b>	

In 2023-2024, 70.4% of military-connected students were part of minoritized racial/ethnic group.



**VETERAN CENTER PROGRAM REVIEW**

Fall 2024 to Spring 2025

Race/Ethnicity	Headcount	Pct
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	0.3%
Asian	46	7.6%
Black - Non-Hispanic	32	5.3%
Filipino	78	12.9%
Hispanic	186	30.8%
Pacific Islander	11	1.8%
White Non-Hispanic	166	27.5%
Multiraces	69	11.4%
Unknown	13	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>603</b>	

Gender	Headcount	Pct
Female	203	33.7%
Male	378	62.7%
Unreported	22	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>603</b>	

Disability	Headcount	Pct
Has Disability	62	10.3%
No Disability	553	91.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>603</b>	

First Generation College	Headcount	Pct
First Generation	288	47.8%
Not First Generation	286	47.4%
Unreported	29	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>603</b>	

Low Income	Headcount	Pct
Low Income Student	113	18.7%
Not Low Income	491	81.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>603</b>	

In 2024-2025, 70.3% of military-connected students were part of minoritized racial/ethnic group. Much of the military-connected student community members are first-generation college students. Military-affiliated students who are underrepresented, disproportionately impacted (in addition to their veteran status) or racially minoritized are oftentimes made aware of or referred to resources on campus relating to their specific needs, such as: Learning Communities, Pride Center, Disability Resource Center, SparkPoint, EOPS, and Promise Scholars. Additionally, an equity and social justice

## **Student Services - STSV - Veterans Services – Program Review**

lens is utilized for program development as it is important to have an intersectional approach with veterans and their multiple identities, experiences, and communities in which they belong. Various campus and community organizations come to the Center to present and offer services for military-affiliated students, such as: Disability Resource Center, SparkPoint, career counseling, NPower, EDD, NovaWorks, etc. to provide additional resources, striving to close equity gaps for disproportionately impacted military-connected students. Veterans Services programming has also included acknowledgement and celebration of heritage months, such as: Latine Heritage Month, Native American Heritage Month, Black History Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Women's History Month, and Pride Month to ensure that underrepresented, disproportionately impacted or racially minoritized students feel seen and represented within the Center, its community, and services.

### **Student Access, Retention, and Completion**

#### **4. How has student access, retention, and completion changed over the course of this program review cycle?**

Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 persistence: 51.7%

Fall 2021 to Fall 2022 persistence: 32.2%

Fall 2022 to Spring 2023 persistence: 79.8%

Fall 2023 to Spring 2024 persistence: 72.6%

Fall 2023 to Fall 2024 persistence: 50.1%

Fall 2024 to Spring 2025 persistence: 70.6%

The numbers have overall increased during this review period. The early review period from last cycle was during the pandemic which most likely affected these numbers, having stabilized since as a result, in addition to increased retention and persistence efforts.

### **Delivery Method(s)**

#### **5. What delivery method(s) does your program utilize to best serve students? (ie. in person, in the community, online, hybrid, hyflex, scheduled appointments, drop ins etc.). How does your program determine which delivery methods are most beneficial for students?**

Many veterans utilizing VA education benefits take classes via all available methods: online, hybrid, and in person; having at least one in-person or hybrid class is required to receive full housing allowance benefits from the VA. Since many veterans and other military-connected students live out of the area and commute to CSM, online classes and counseling appointments are necessary for them to access. Veterans Services offers online personal and academic meeting appointments. There are also some online programming options such as military-connected transfer presentations from universities from the Bay Area and surrounding areas, with additional hybrid or online programming options being planned to accommodate student schedules and locations. Verbal and written feedback, along with attendance have been considered for delivery methods.

### **Partnerships**

#### **6. What are your on and off-campus community partnerships and how are they operationalized to support students?**

The Disability Resource Center, SparkPoint, Health and Wellness Center, and Counseling Services have been some of our key campus partnerships. Off-campus community partnerships include: Veterans Curation Program, NPower, EDD, NovaWorks, San Mateo County Veteran Service Office, Peninsula Vet Center, VA Palo Alto, American Legion, Swords to Plowshares, Edward Jones, and Blue Star Moms. Partnerships are utilized to provide information and resources to Veterans Services students through programming, resource fairs, literature, and service connection.

### **Institutional Alignment**

**7. How does your program support the College of San Mateo as an Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) designated institution?**  
Veterans Services serves a large population of students from these communities. Students are informed and referred to Learning Communities and clubs, student support within Center represents these communities, and these groups are reflected within heritage month programming. The Center also participates in campus events that relates to these designations, and has collaborated with the VA Minority Veterans outreach initiatives. Efforts will be made to strengthen the relationship between the Center and VA Minority Veterans outreach initiatives.

## **II. LOOKING BACK: Accomplishments and Challenges**

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### **8. Describe major accomplishments since the last program review cycle.**

Veterans Services had over 400 more contacts, touchpoints, student meetings, attendance numbers in 2024-2025 from 2023-2024. There was an increase in community partnerships. The Center coordinated its inaugural Student Spotlight event to highlight student veterans and center their military, educational, and personal experiences for the campus community and community partners. Lastly, additional space was recently approved for counseling, wellness programming, and quiet space for student veterans.

### **8.A. How did your accomplishments help to close the opportunity gap for disproportionately impacted, underserved or racially minoritized students?**

The accomplishments helped close the opportunity gap for students of veteran status and intersecting identities through increasing overall services, building community, and creating awareness.

### **9. Describe major challenges since the last program review cycle. Have these challenges contributed to the expansion of or continuation of equity gaps?**

Major challenges have been uncertainty from the federal government and its funding and services for veterans. This uncertainty has affected students, their families, and their government and federally funded service providers. This has contributed to the continuation of equity gaps. While it is our hope that this will be a relatively short-term challenge, it has affected the confidence and expectations of some students.

### **Impact of Resources Allocations Process (250 word limit)**

### **10. Describe the impact to date of previously requested resources (staff, non- instructional assignment, equipment, facilities, research, funding) including both resource requests that were approved and were not approved.**

Additional space for personal counseling services, wellness programming, and quiet space for student veterans was recently granted through a resource request. This space is currently being prepared for use for next semester. Once it is in use, it will be a great resource for Veterans Services' students and their personal counseling services, select wellness programming, a quiet, meditative space, and additional, private space for students to meet with CSM VA Certifying Officials.

A part-time retention specialist has been requested for the past few years via resource request. This request has been denied. It was requested again this cycle, and we look forward to learning the decision. Having a retention specialist would greatly benefit military-connected students and their educational journey at CSM. The retention specialist would follow up with students regarding their visits to the Center, check in with their needs, and inform students of Center, campus, and community resources to ensure they are accessing adequate support. Identifying at-risk students earlier on would greatly impact their retention and persistence. Having additional staffing to support student tracking progress and relationship-building would lead to increased student success.

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### **10.A. What impact have these resources had on your program/department/office and measures of student success or client satisfaction?**

Having additional staff support of a retention specialist in Veterans Services would assist with student retention and assist with their persistence and access to services.

### **10.B. What have you been unable to accomplish due to resource requests that were not approved?**

Having additional staff support of a retention specialist in Veterans Services would assist with student retention and assist with their persistence and access to services. Having this additional resource would assist the Program Services Coordinator in their role and allow for additional touchpoints from the Center to the student veterans and military-connected community.

### **10.C. How have these resources (or lack of resources) specifically disproportionately impacted students/clients?**

Students would have additional touchpoints and communications regarding services, participation, academic needs, and follow-up regarding resources if a retention specialist was added to the Veterans team.

## **III. SAOs and SLOs**

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### **11. State your Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) and/or Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs).**

90% of military-affiliated students will be satisfied with the services and resources at the VROC.

Additional: Increase the number of veterans applying for Financial Aid (FAFSA)

### **12. Describe how your program assessed your SAOs and/or SLOs.**

2023-2024 PRIE-facilitated survey was administered

2024-2025 Veterans Services-facilitated focus group was conducted

Additional: 2024-2025 weekly financial aid office/drop-in hours in Veterans Resource & Opportunity Center, also a financial aid presentation at Bulldog Battalion. Recommendations to apply for financial aid is included in the Center's welcome packet and checklists, is included on applicable electronic communications, and verbally discussed with students.

### **13. Summarize the findings of your program's SAO/SLO Assessments.**

#### **13.A. What are some improvements that have been, or can be, implemented as a result of SAO/SLO Assessment? Please include meaningful action plans to improve student access and success.**

Increase efforts in creating a welcoming environment within the Center through customer service, demeanor, resources, and aesthetics of the physical space.

Hire additional VA work study students to ensure welcoming environment is sustained

#### **13.B. How did your program's SAO/SLO assessment address antiracism?**

SLO/SAO assessment included a diverse group of students to ensure various perspectives were provided and welcomed.

#### **13.C. How did your program's SAO/SLO assessment address equity?**

Next time, an online focus group can also be an option to ensure students who live out of the area can also participate in data collection and assessment. Additionally, questions will reflect antiracism initiatives.

## IV. LOOKING AHEAD

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### SAOs and SLOs for Next Review Cycle (100 word limit)

### Program Improvement Initiatives/Resource Requests (250 word limit)

**14. With an equity and antiracism lens, what changes could be implemented to improve your program? Please include meaningful action plans to improve student access and success.**

In collaboration with the other District Veterans Services departments, host a VET NET Ally training program for staff, faculty, and administrators to learn how to best interact with, serve, and understand student veterans.

More effectively partner with minoritized veteran organizations and departments such as: The Center for Minority Veterans (VA), Center for Women Veterans (VA), LGBTQ+ Veteran Care (VA), National Association of Minority Veterans, Women Veterans Alliance, other Student Veterans of America chapters.

Create diverse and inclusive social media series for heritage months focusing on knowledge and various media in regards to various veteran groups. Strategically plan heritage month programming to pique student interest, engagement, and community-building.

**15. How will you address the opportunities for improvement that you identified throughout the prior sections of this Program Review?**

- Create digital tracking and reporting processes for Veterans Services
- Update Veterans communication platforms: website, welcome packet, checklists, and marketing materials
- Create and implement student veteran orientation by beginning of Fall 2026
- During next cycle, move towards Student Spotlight with a graduation/recognition component
- During next cycle, begin Districtwide VROC/VRC Veterans 5K Run, Walk, & Roll
- Continue with development of wraparound services within the Center and programming/events such as the Veterans Resource Fair.
- Increase social media presence
- Continue to build and strengthen partnerships with community resources and organizations

**15.A. What additional antiracism training do you/your program need in the upcoming year?**

Student training (for student workers and active club officers and members) and staff training in partnership with Learning Communities or Office of Equity, and community organizations for training on antiracist practices and implicit bias, intersectionality within military-affiliated populations, trauma-informed training and workshops, and event collaboration.

VET NET Ally training would also provide a wide array of information on the above as well as Veteran Critical Theory application.

**15.B. What research or training will you need to accomplish these plans?**

Student training (for student workers and active club officers and members) and staff training in partnership with Learning Communities or Office of Equity, and community organizations for training on antiracist practices and implicit bias, intersectionality within military-affiliated populations, trauma-informed training and workshops, and event collaboration.

VET NET Ally training would also provide a wide array of information on the above as well as Veteran Critical Theory application.

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### 15.C.What supplies, equipment, or facilities improvements do you need?

With the recent acquisition of additional space and equipment for counseling and wellness programming, no additional supplies, equipment, or facilities improvements are needed at this time. This space and equipment will be operating by the end of this semester.

## V. STATEMENT OF COLLABORATION

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### A. Statement of Collaboration

**The staff members listed below collaborated in an open and forthright dialogue to prepare this Program Review. Statements included herein accurately reflect the conclusions and opinions by consensus of the program staff involved in the comprehensive self-study.**

#### **Participants in the writing of this Program Review**

Marcos Baluyut-Hand

#### **Principal Author: Name and Title**

Marcos Baluyut-Hand, Program Services Coordinator- Veterans

#### **Date**

11/14/2025

#### **Name of Dean and/or Supervisor**

Arielle Smith, Acting Dean of Enrollment Services

#### **Date**

11/14/2025