

## DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM: **Veterans' Services 2011-2012**

### 1. **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM:**

Veterans' Services at College of San Mateo has been developed to provide a comprehensive array of services to all veteran students, active duty personnel, members of the reserves, and including their dependents and family. Primary services include certification of veteran students for GI Bill benefits, referrals to departments on campus such as financial aid, counseling, DSPS, and psychological services. In addition, referrals are made to off campus community social services such as the Veteran's Hospital, social and mental health service agencies, and other veteran professional associations. Most recently, the establishment of the Veterans Resource and Opportunity Center (VROC) provides a central location on campus for veteran students. The VROC serves as a place for veterans to congregate and as a place to relax and unwind. The VROC also has two computer rooms that can be used to complete homework assignments. In addition, the four computers include software that assist as learning aids, and all four computers are Skype capable which allows the veterans to converse with friends and colleagues still serving in the military. To ensure the VROC is readily available, it is open from 8 am – 8 pm Monday thru Thursday and 8 am – 3 pm on Fridays. The student staff is comprised of both veteran and non-veterans. In addition, CSM staff from Admissions and Records, Financial Aid and Counseling are spending approximately six hours per week at the VROC as a means of having a presence and providing direct service to the students.

2. Based on data from *Core Program and Student Success Indicators* (provided by PRIE for programs offering courses), information you have collected about student users, data about the numbers of student users, results of student satisfaction surveys, and the goals stated in your most recent Program Review, please identify any key successes and challenges.

The establishment of the VROC is in of itself a success. Having had its official grand opening in February 2012, the Center has been very well received by veteran students. During the month of February alone, over 300 veteran students visited the Center. Another perceived success is the Measure G Funding that has been provided to the VROC to sustain its services including the support of students to staff the Center. Further, two of the veteran student staff are being supported by the Veteran Administration's Work Study Program; the salaries of the two students are fully borne by the VA.

Though at the time of writing this report there has been no assessment of veteran student satisfaction with the Center, other veteran services have been surveyed for effectiveness. A sampling of the survey results follow.

Satisfied with the GI Bill Certification Process?	Very Satisfied	66.67%	Satisfied	22.22%
Satisfied with Staff answering your questions?	Very Satisfied	88.89%	Not Satisfied	11.11%
Satisfied with level of courtesy and respect?	Excellent	88.89%	Poor	11.11%
Satisfaction with Financial Aid Liaison.	Excellent	44.44%	Very Good	33.33%
Satisfaction with the Academic Counselor	Excellent	44.44%	Very Good	33.33%
Overall quality of CSM Veterans' Services	Excellent	100.00%		

Overall satisfaction as provided by qualitative responses was also very highly regarded. Sample comments are noted below.

#### GI Bill Certification

- Explanations of benefits and processes were clear
- Took a little longer than expected. Not sure if it was CSM or VA's fault. Regardless, I was satisfied.

#### Financial Aid

- Eric is always available.
- Financial Aid Liaison was very helpful.
- Staff was courteous and kind.

#### Counseling

- I have used Martin. I wasn't aware there was a vet academic counselor. I would probably stay with Martin anyway. He has been fabulous.

3. Are you on track for meeting the goals/targets that your program identified in its most recent Program Review? If not, please explain possible reasons why. If needed, update your goal/targets based on these reasons.

There were four goals/targets that were established in the previous program review. Status of each goal or target is addressed below.

Goal 1. Establish the Veteran Resource Center by Fall 2001. Though the Center was completed by the end of the fall 2001 semester, it did not officially open until February of 2012. This goal has been met.

Goal 2. Monitor the effectiveness of the Veteran Resource (Opportunity) Center. Assessment of the VROC and its services will be conducted during the remainder of the spring 2012 semester. As well, assessment of the VROC and its services will be ongoing as a means of ensuring continuous improvement.

Goal 3. Secure VA or CSM Work Study Funds to support the Veteran Resource (Opportunity) Center. Fulfilled. Two veteran students have been hired under the VA Work Study Program and one student has been hired under the CSM Work Study Program.

Goal 4. Secure a Program Services Coordinator, Veterans Services staff position. This goal has not yet been attained due to continuing budgetary constraints. To ensure the

VROC is sustainable and maintains the quality of service and attention it needs to properly serve CSM veteran students, the position will continue to be requested.

Goal 5. Ensure that counselors are trained and aware of policies and regulations that govern GI Bill eligibility. At least one counselor is aware of the intricacies involved in ensuring that veterans student are properly informed and registered for courses that fulfill the student's educational goals.

Goal 6. Ensure veteran students are aware of and apply for the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver (BOG), federal financial aid and various scholarships. Veteran students are informed of the BOG, financial aid availability and scholarships through the GI Bill Orientation. As well, they are informed about the Financial Liaison available to them in the Financial Aid Office.

4. Have you identified any new goals or projects for the program to focus on during this next year? Please explain (grants, stipends, initiatives, etc.).

-A proposal for an Innovation Grant was submitted to continue to support in- and outreach for veterans.

-An English 100 class is being established for veteran students.

-Continue to bring about awareness of veterans issues as they relate to transitioning from active military duty to student life. Veterans Services will continue to offer educational programs and workshops that focus on the experiences and unique needs and circumstances of veterans.

5. Are there any critical issues you expect to face in the coming year? How will you address those challenges?

Maintaining sufficient staffing at the VROC will be a challenge. A&R and Financial aid staff will continue to devote a few hours each week to the VROC, however, these staff have primary responsibilities associated their A&R and Financial Aid. Thus, these staff will be challenged to fulfill their primary and secondary responsibilities. It is important that as soon as possible, institutional funding be provided to employ a staff member dedicated to supporting the VROC.

Student staffing is currently funded by Measure G, VA work study and federal work study funds. However, these funding sources are not permanent and may prove to be a scare resource in the future.

**6. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs) AND ASSESSMENT FOCUS FOR THIS YEAR:**

- a. Identify at least one course SLO on which to focus. Describe the assessment strategies you will use and your method of reflection and documentation for this cycle.

85% of certified GI Bill eligible students will apply for both the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver and will file the FAFSA. To assess the attainment of this SLO, the number of certified GI Bill veteran students will be monitored to determine if they have applied for the BOG and filed the FAFSA.

Veteran students certified for GI Bill benefits will understand the necessity of maintaining a current Student Educational Plan on file. Student records will be monitored to ensure that students have a current SEP on file.

**7. SUMMARY OF RESOURCES NEEDED TO REACH PROGRAM ACTION STEPS**

*(Data resources: Educational Master Plan, 2008 (EMP); Data Updates to EMP, 2011-12; Institutional Priorities, 2008-2011; 5 & 5 College Strategies; College Index, 2008/9-2011/12; GE-SLOs; SLOs; other institutional data; department records; Core Program and Student Success Indicators; previous Program Review and Planning reports)*

- a. In the matrices below, itemize the resources needed to reach program action steps and describe the expected outcomes for program improvement.\* Specifically, describe the potential outcomes of receiving these resources and the programmatic impact if the requested resources cannot be granted.

\*Note: Whenever possible, requests should stem from assessment of SLOs and the resulting program changes or plans. Ideally, SLOs are assessed, the assessments lead to planning, and the resources requested link directly to those plans.

Full-Time Faculty Positions Requested (if applicable)	Expected Outcomes if Granted and Expected Impact if Not Granted	If applicable, <u>briefly</u> indicate how the requested resources will link to achieving department action steps based on SLO assessment.
Input text here.	Input text here.	Input text here.

Classified Positions Requested	Expected Outcomes if Granted and Expected Impact if Not Granted	If applicable, <u>briefly</u> indicate how the requested resources will link to achieving department action steps based on SLO assessment.
Program Services Coordinator, Veterans Services	<p>The PSC for veterans will be dedicated to developing programs and managing support services that contribute to veteran students' acclimation to college and promotes student success.</p> <p>If not granted, quality of services will be diminished, needed support and attention to needs of this at-risk population will be neglected due to limited staffing and resources.</p>	<p>A dedicated staff person will enhance services to veteran students, serve as an advocate for this at-risk population, an ensure these students are aware of and utilizing available college and community resources. Further, the PSC for veterans can work individually and with small groups to assist with applying for the BOG and in completing the FAFSA. Lastly, the PSC for Veterans will monitor veteran students' academic progress and refer identified students to the Learning center for tutoring and other kinds to assistance.</p>

- b. For instructional resources or program resources including equipment and materials, please list the exact items you want to acquire and the total costs, including tax, shipping, and handling. Include items used (such as computers and furniture) and all materials designed for use by students and staff as resources (such as lab equipment, books, CDs, technology-based materials, educational software, tests, non-printed materials, etc). Add rows to the tables as necessary. If you have questions as to the specificity required, please consult with your dean. Please list by priority.

Resources Requested	Expected Outcomes if Granted and Expected Impact if Not Granted	If applicable, <u>briefly</u> indicate how the requested resources will link to achieving department action steps based on SLO assessment.
<b>Item:</b> Input text here. <b>Number:</b> Input text here. <b>Vendor:</b> Input text here. <b>Unit price:</b> Input text here. <b>Total Cost:</b> Input text here. <b>Status*:</b> Input text here.	Input text here.	Input text here.

\*Status = New, Upgrade, Replacement, Maintenance or Repair.

## 8. PROGRAM REVIEW PARTICIPANTS AND SIGNATURES

Date of this *Annual Update for Program Review and Planning* evaluation:

Please list the department's *Annual Update for Program Review and Planning* report team as appropriate:

Primary program contact person: Henry B. Villareal  
Phone and email address: 574-6590 Henry.Villareal@smccd.edu  
Full-time faculty:  
Part-time faculty:  
Administrators:  
Classified staff: Jeremy Mileo  
Students:

<hr/> <i>Primary Program Contact Person's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<hr/> <i>Full-time Faculty's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<hr/> <i>Part-time Faculty's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<hr/> <i>Classified Staff Person's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<hr/> <i>Student's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<hr/> <i>Dean's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>