

College of San Mateo

2018-19 Student Services Program Review

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Program Name

Please select your program

Veterans Services

Division

Student Services

Submission Date

Description of Program

File upload

[VROC Program Review 2018_19 Part 1.docx](#)

2a. Describe the results of your previous Program Review's action plan.

If your answer is more than 2000 characters (approximately 300 words), please upload a Word document below (10 MB or less). If you're not sure, please upload your answer. Please upload text only; we cannot ensure that non-text such as images, diagrams, or charts will be retained in the final submission.

Two years ago, the VROC submitted a program review that prioritized specific items that were seen as important to the program in order to keep up with an emerging student population and the resources required to sustain the expansion. Outlined were six (6) items that were aimed at improving student success and the program in general:

- i. Secure a full time Certifying Official.
- ii. Maintain workshops and other types of institutional training for staff/faculty/administrators.
- iii. Monitor academic progress for student veterans.
- iv. Establish a learning community for student veterans.
- v. Establish a Veterans Advisory Council.
- vi. Host events that recognize and promote the visibility of student veterans.

As a result of these goals, we have assigned a full-time certifying official in our Admissions & Records office, we have conducted faculty/staff workshops on how to "Become a Veteran Ally" during our Flex Day programming, we have developed a Counseling 111: College Success course designed specifically for veterans, established a Veterans Advisory council and have hosted events that have highlighted not just our student veterans service in the military but have highlighted their academic achievements on campus. Overall, we have either reached or are in the process of reaching the established goals to maintain the positive direction of the program.

2b. Program coherence and effectiveness: Explain any curriculum changes since last program review, including SLO alignments

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Since our last program review, our program, along with the entire Student Services division, have reassessed our SLO's in order to see if they are accurate and if they truly contribute to student success and program efficiency. Furthermore, the Student Services Division has redeveloped the SLO approach and created Service Assessment Outcome (SAO) in order to more accurately assess how student services programs effectively contribute to student success.

In the 2016 Program Review for the VROC, the two SLO's for the department were:

SLO #1: 85% of GI Benefit eligible veterans will complete and submit the FAFSA.

SLO #2: 90% of GI Bill eligible veterans will apply for the Board of Governor's Fee Waiver (BOGFW).

Although it is still a core goal to provide every opportunity and option to encourage students to apply for FAFSA, we determined that the two SLO's did not directly reflect how the program assesses student success. As a division, we changed our approach to a Student Assessment Outcome to further align with the strategic goals of the student Services Division. Currently, we have one (1) SAO:

SAO #1: 90% of student veterans will be satisfied with the services and resources in the VROC.

With this SAO question, we can identify the overall quality of the staff and services we offer at the VROC. In order to quantify the "quality" of the VROC, we administered a Student Veteran survey that directly asks students about their overall satisfaction with the staff, services, information, physical space they utilize. After administering the survey during the Spring 2018 semester, the results concluded that over 90% of our students were satisfied with the VROC. Our goal is to expand on

this SAO and potentially add other SAO's that align with the expansion of our program.

2c. Student success and equity: Discuss what your program has done to address equity gaps between student populations and between modes of delivery (online, hybrid, and face-to-face), describing your successes, works in progress, and/or ongoing challenges.

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The VROC staff and faculty has directly participated in equity pedagogy and projects by identifying three specific elements in our department: staff, programming and training.

Staff: The Program Services Coordinator for the VROC is currently enrolled in the Enacting Educational Equity Train the Trainer Series (E3T2S) that focuses on trainings and workshops to identify, address and create best practices for equity-centered pedagogy around their area of expertise. In addition, our Academic Counselor has revised his counseling time slots and approach to offer much more attainable counseling appointments and expanding his "drop-in" hours during high peak registration times when it becomes more imperative to update student education plans for our students.

Programming: As we continue to expand our presence on campus, we continue to emphasize the need to address the equity gaps within our student population. There are a few opportunities for the VROC to take a lead in addressing equity gaps due to the Student Profile research data conducted by CSM's PRIE Office. There are three main objectives the VROC

- i. 64% of veterans are first generation college students.
- ii. Increase in Hispanic veterans attending CSM is 31% - Aligns with CSM's status as a Hispanic Serving Institute (HSI).
- iii. Veteran education benefits will increase for students in STEM fields thus allowing us to focus on supporting services in that area.

These three items serve as an opportunity for the VROC to create new avenues of access for our students. Although we hypothetically can create or introduce as many programs as we want, they would not be successful if we do not implement support services and resources for our students to succeed.

Lastly, our staff and counselors have and will continue to attend state and national conferences, flex days and participate in equity driven committees to stay up to date with best practices and conform our program to fit the equity pedagogy.

2d. Provide an update on any long-term plans that are still in progress (if applicable).

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As the VROC and student veteran population continues to expand, there a few updates we need to make within the VROC to sustain that expansion.

VROC Furniture and Technology:

Eventually, we will need to update our computers and lap tops in the VROC. During Spring 2018, we purchased a new printer, copier, fax machine for the VROC to replace the obsolete one that was in place. The next phase of our upgrades will be to update the four (4) computers in our computer rooms and the three (3) lap tops on our lap top bar. This will become essential since our new equipment will needed as more and more student work, proliferation of online classes and communication with instructors through CANVAS becomes the priority.

Veterans College Success Course

A Veterans College Success Course will help establish a "standard" of knowledge and information delivery method for new and continuing student veterans. The aim for this course is to inform the student of the necessary steps they must take to access, retain and use their GI Bill benefits, provide information regarding majors, transfer and graduation, study skills and immerse the student with campus community by exposing them to all of the services and resources aimed at student success,

Veterans Jam Event (Similar to Math/Writing Jams already held).

Ultimately, VROC would like to mirror our colleagues approach to basic skills and study habits by producing a veteran specific Jam event. This would more than likely work best if it's a district wide event.

3a. Review student program usage and discuss any differences in student success indicators across demographics. Refer to SARS, Banner, PRIE data, and other data sources as appropriate.

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Along the same demographic lines as the U.S. Military and the College of San Mateo, the CSM PRIE data results have highlighted some areas where the VROC can take initiative to reinforce current programs and develop new ones in order to respond to the changing veteran student body.

Age: As with any "non-traditional" student body, student veterans enter CSM as a more older and mature student body. In 2017/18 Academic Year, 58.4% of veterans were between the ages of 20-29. In addition, if we add the next age category, 30-34, then that spikes our student veteran population to 77.1%.

Ethnicity: The PRIE data results also have shifted some focus to the increase of Hispanic veterans enrolling at CSM. 31.2% of our student veteran population has checked off Hispanic as their ethnicity and its up from 28% from 2016/17. This is significant because we see our Hispanic student veterans' demographic mirror the increase in numbers the general CSM demographic is experiencing as well. CSM Became a Hispanic Serving Institute (HSI) in 2017 and this should lead to the closer partnership between the two programs in addressing the shift in demographics.

VROC: From July 2017 to July 2018, there we a total of 6,500 visits captured by the SAR TRAK check in system in the VROC.

The majority of our students that utilize the VROC as a lounge/relax space in during breaks in their class schedule. In addition, we house our academic counselor, financial aid assistance and disability counselor where student fulfill their necessary appointments. We have four computers and three lap tops around our center with access to free printing. Lastly, we have a selection of snacks and coffee all day long where our students can either take to class to enjoy here at the VROC.

3b. Discuss what your program has done this Program Review cycle to address achievement gaps between student populations, describing your successes, works in progress, and/or ongoing challenges.

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The VROC is a unique program that although it operates similar to a learning community, it does not specifically base its participation by addressing a student's ethnic/cultural background. We focus our services based on a student's shared experience within the US Military regardless of background, therefore encountering unique gaps within the student's college experience. Our main focus, outside of CSM admissions and GI Bill applications, is the transition experience from the military to college life. The main initiatives we are currently undertaking are focused on the transition process with the intent to inform and communicate the various services and resources available to them in an organized manner, eliminating "one off" contact. These initiatives include:

A. College Connected Wellness Program: This program connects the VROC, DSPS and our Health Center to provide a specific set of services that revolve around physical, mental and emotional support. There are specific staff contacts at each location to maintain a sense of reliability if personnel and information consistency.

B. Counseling 111: College Success Course: This course will be available in the Spring 2019 semester. The course will be taught by our veteran's academic counselor and focus on communicating registration information veterans must know in order to maintain their benefits eligibility. In addition, the course will also focus on study skills, college familiarity, campus services and major/transfer information. Our goal is to develop a "cohort" model for our veterans to raise comradery amongst them and a sense of familiarity to ease the transition process.

C. Co-Curricular Activities/Softball Team: In the Fall of 2018, the student veterans in the VROC and staff/faculty that work with them, formed an intramural softball team that participates in San Mateo Recreation League. This helps tremendously in connecting with students in a relaxed environment and getting a chance to know them better.

3c. Discuss what your program has done this Program Review cycle to address achievement gaps between modes of delivery (online, hybrid, and face-to-face), describing your successes, works in progress, and/or ongoing challenges.

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Since the VROC does not have a class to gather students at an organized time and location, communication to students has been a challenge. Working with our Certifying Official from Admissions & Records, we have developed a master list of all veterans enrolled at CSM at any given semester. This has helped tremendously in communication important information, deadlines, events and activities.

1. VROC Rucksack Newsletter: VROC has also developed a monthly newsletter called the "Rucksack" this newsletter is more student oriented and although it still includes important dates and deadlines, we highlight student academic, community and personal achievements.

2. Pathfinders Program: This program will hire three or four students to specifically focus on reaching out to students, participating in outreach events and assist in the VROC by becoming the primary contact people for students how have general questions regarding the CSM admission process, GI Bill, forms and VROC activities.

Ultimately, we are trying to be creative with our modes of information delivery that is informative, not redundant and student centered.

3d. Program Efficiency Indicators: Do we deliver programs efficiently given out resources? Summarize trends in program efficiency. Discuss no-shows, group vs. individual delivery, etc.

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VROC efficiency can be measured into three categories based on our student veteran satisfaction survey:

1. Program Information: 94.7% of the student responses replied that the information given by the VROC is high or good quality. This serves as a great standard knowing that the questions students have are being answered at a high/good quality.

2. Access to Current Resources: Although our lounge area received a 94.8% satisfaction approval, computer/printing resources received an 84.2% satisfaction, our snacks and food portion only received a 66.6% satisfaction.

3. VROC Experience: Our students indicated that 90.0% of the students who pass through our center for any reason are satisfied with their experience.

The results of this survey allowed us to have a "starting point" to see where our center, services and staff rank regarding student satisfaction. We will adapt our future surveys to become much more specific on student needs in order to anticipate trends and adequately plan and budget for the following year.

3e. Reflect on recent Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) and/or Service Area Outcomes (SAO) assessment

results for the program. Identify trends and discuss areas in need of improvement. Specify how SLO/SAO assessment informs program development and changes to the program.

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1. SAO #1: 90% of student veterans will be satisfied with the services and resources in the VROC.

As noted in question 2.A in greater detail, we are currently in the process of changing from our old SLO's into an SAO that more accurately measures our service/resource satisfaction rate. Although our current SAO, aims at measuring the satisfaction of our students, the SAO falls more in line with the equity initiatives being championed by the college's administration.

This current SAO will allow us to identify the equity gaps in pedagogy, obligations, professional development and resources. We have shifted our focus from being an information based program to a service-connection program. This means that we will expand our reach to address academic success, transportation, housing, food security and financial coaching.

2. Trends: Based on student surveys we conducted in Spring 2018 and PRIE Data research, we have concluded on some trends that will impact our students.

a. Food: There is a need to fill in gaps due to food insecurities our students face, meaning, we will have to create partnerships and fund food programs on campus.

b. Housing/Transportation: A portion of our students face housing and transportation challenges. This is primarily due to the high housing costs of the area and the inaccessibility of the campus through public transportation.

3. Improvements: Traditionally, we have collected this type of information every two years in preparation for program reviews through PRIE research. We will now conduct a much more equity centered survey every year to stay ahead and be proactive with our information rather than to be reactive. This will also allow us to get a more instant feedback tool to see how our newly established initiatives are effective.

4a. Provide a brief description, including actions, measurable outcomes, and timelines

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As noted in the previous section 3.A, the challenges the VROC faces regarding measurable outcomes is that we do not have an organized time and location where we meet our student on a regular basis. That being said, our main goals to address student success and equity will center on the following three initiatives:

A. Counseling Class: Planned to take place in the Spring 2019 semester, this course will serve to specifically cater to the transition experience for student veterans. This will also serve as a test to see if we can connect the VROC to an academic course to further establish the program to mirror our other learning communities. Although there is not time line for this action, we are projecting to complete the data gathering stage by Fall 2019.

B. College-Connected Services: Starting in the Fall 2018 semester, we have connected the VROC, DSPS and Health Services to create programming for our veterans that center around physical, mental, emotional health in addition to addressing food and financial education support. We will look to our newly established Yearly Veterans Survey to measure the success and gaps in the program and how to best serve our students.

C. Yearly Veteran Survey: Prior to Fall 2018, veteran's data was collected every two years and conducted by PRIE to fulfill program review requirements. Currently, we have started to conduct an annual veteran's survey during the Spring semester to measure the success of our program, student satisfaction and trends we should focus on. We conducted our initial survey Spring 2018 and will continue on that schedule.

4b. What will your program do to increase student success and promote student equity in the next two years? What kind of professional development and institutional support will be engaged and enacted to meet these goals?

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As mentioned in the previous action plan in section 3A, B and C, to successfully implement and complete our equity plans we will need to invest more time and training in the following categories:

1. Student: Pathfinders: On a student level, we will need to establish our VROC pathfinders to establish a peer-to-peer network of student workers that will aim at assisting veterans in their transition and eliminate any hesitation in students asking questions they might otherwise feel uncomfortable asking.

2. Staff: CSM/District Flex Days, Staff Trainings
Although VROC staff has conducted a "Veteran Ally" workshop to help campus staff and faculty with best practices for interacting with our veterans, we will need to get support in attending other workshops and trainings that will allow us to bring the knowledge back to campus.

3. State: CCC Veterans Summit, NAVPA Conferences
Continue to attend professional conferences where we can keep up to date on information and learn best new practices to introduce to our program.

4c. Describe other professional development activities and institutional support and collaborations that would most effectively ensure that the center achieves its goals and plans.

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1. As part of our initiative and ongoing efforts to increase student success and access, we would like to continue to participate in campus committees centered on equity such as the CSM Equity Committee and the Enacting Educational Equity Train the Trainer Series (E3T2S) which will allow us to interact with our colleagues on finding best approaches and practices to produce equity centered programs.
2. SMCCD Veteran Services Committee serves as a district wide committee that allows us to provide a space to discuss updates from the Veteran Affairs Department regarding benefits, update forms and processes amongst our colleges and it also give us an opportunity to streamline our processes to create a uniformed set of standards that eliminate challenges for students.
3. Grant writing education and workshops to expand our financial resources. This will be helpful as we continue to update and expand our services and equipment for our center.