



Mission

Veterans Student Services (VSS) assists veterans and dependents at California State University, Fullerton in successfully navigating the academic environment through guidance, support services, and resources. VSS is committed to offering personalized services to veterans and dependents by providing a unique learning community that facilitates the students' social and academic integration into the university.

Qualitative and quantitative data that reflects your work for the 12-13 year. Not all data will be used in the final publication but we do want to collect as much data as you have.

In 2012/13, Veterans Student Services recorded over 5000 visits to its new Veterans Resource Center. Student veterans, dependents, and prospective students are utilizing services at a 91% increase over that of the 2011/2012 academic year.

VSS is reaching 38% of our total student veteran population.

Family/Dependents/Supporters/Prospective students utilization increased by 367%. This is due to both - VSS outreach efforts and student veterans involving the general student community in their academic projects, assignments, and social interaction.

According to CREAL's 2012/2013 annual evaluation report, student satisfaction of services provided by VSS increased from 84% to 96%.

*We are awaiting GPA and retention data from IR & AS – we are anticipating positive outcomes.

What do we need to know about your work from the year? This can be narrative or bullets.

Veterans Student Services continues to build on the foundation of providing student support services from a strengths-based perspective. We believe it is important to see the student as valuable and capable individuals who have a great deal of training and experience that can be drawn from to achieve their academic goals.

We have endeavored to create an environment of inclusion where all students feel welcomed to participate in support services, student activities, and events. This is highlighted by our female veteran involvement. In civilian populations being a female is not necessarily a barrier to seeking services or getting involved. For women veterans historically, accessing services and involvement is minimal to none. Where many schools struggle to engage their female veteran, VSS reaches 38% of its female veteran population.

By implementing a relational leadership model of service to our students, VSS has endeavored to balance the integration and identity development needs of the students, provide comprehensive and relevant services, and empower them to achieve their academic and career goals.

What are the most exciting things that happened in your area this year?

Our Story (becoming a stand-alone department)

Veterans Student Services' history began with its establishment in 2008. VSS found its original home in the WoMen's Center where the foundation was strategically laid for what has become a model CSU Veterans Resource Center. In 2010, VSS was awarded a Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education, Center of Excellence for Veterans Student Success Grant. The purpose of this grant is to create insightful and innovative student support services. Over the last three years, VSS has developed a comprehensive program that is proving to consistently and positively impact student veterans' academic success, retention, and graduation. As of June 3, 2013, VSS became a stand-alone department where student retention is its focus and expansion of services is anticipated. VSS is committed to assisting student veterans in becoming engaged with the campus community, accomplishing their academic goals, and moving on to meaningful careers.

Events

November 9, 2012 - Veterans Student Services hosted the Grand Opening of the new Veterans Resource Center.

The Grand Opening was the culmination of a week-long celebration that included the Titan-walk display of our Wall of Heroes, the Student Veterans Association tree dedication and student participation in the Fullerton, Veterans Day Parade. The grand opening was attended by 120 CSUF students, staff, faculty, administration, community members, and elected officials. The Veterans Resource Center serves as a central location for student veterans and dependents of veterans to meet other students, study, and access resources and support.

March 19, 2013 Cal State Fullerton sponsored the conference: Women Veterans in Higher Education: Integrity, Valor, & Service.

The purpose of the event was to acknowledge the service of women veterans, recognize they are a vital community in higher education, and educate college campuses and community service providers about the female veteran experience and how we can best serve them on our campuses. The event was attended by 89 CSUF and other community college and university students, staff, and faculty, and community members.

May 4, 2013 6th Annual Veterans Appreciation Night

This annual event is an evening of celebration for our CSUF veteran community. It is an opportunity to recognize our graduating student veterans, honor deploying or recently deployed students, award two *Veterans for Success* scholarships for continuing students, and acknowledge staff and faculty who have demonstrated outstanding service to our students. The event was attended by 250 CSUF students, staff, faculty, family, and community members.

Presentations

Ward, C. (2012, September 8). Understanding Women Veterans in Today's Society. Presented at the Diocese of San Bernardino 5th Annual Women's Conference, San Bernardino, CA.

Ward, C (2012, November 5). Meeting the Needs of Student Veterans Now. Presented at the Pacific Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers Annual Conference, San Diego, CA.

Ward, C. (2012, November 11). Creating a Brighter Future for Veterans: Linking on-and-off Campus Resources for Veterans Through Services Offered by Counseling Practicum Students. Presented at the Western Association of Counselor Education and Supervision Annual Conference, Portland, OR.

Ward, C. (2013, March 12). Women Veterans: Celebrating Their Contributions, Their Experience, and Their Strengths. Presented at California State University, Dominguez Hills, Carson, CA.

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