OUTCOME
Student veterans and military-connected students’ academic success will be positively impacted by the VRC.

OUTCOME SUPPORTS
☒ University: Goal 1
☒ Division: Goal 5
☐ Department:
☐ Other:

OUTCOME TYPE
☒ Performance Outcome
☐ Student Learning Outcome

DATA COLLECTION METHODS
• Survey

ASSESSMENT APPROACH
☐ Direct assessment
☒ Indirect assessment

METHODS AND MEASURES
The VRC provides or promotes a wide-variety of resources to support student’s academic success, including on-campus tutoring, the student veteran lounge, VRC computer lab, VRC free printing, and more.

The questionnaire collected data on the following:
1. Was the respondent informed of academic support resources provided or promoted by the VRC (such as on-campus tutoring, student veteran lounge, VRC computer lab, VRC printing, etc.)?
2. How many academic support resources did the respondent use during the 2017-2018 academic year?
3. The degree in which the respondent agrees or disagrees that the VRC’s academic support resources had a positive effect on their academic success
   A. The questionnaire defined “Academic Success” as the respondent’s perception of maintaining a satisfactory GPA, their ability to continue education from one semester to the next, and the belief that they are progressing toward their educational goals
4. The degree in which the respondent is satisfied or dissatisfied with the VRC’s process for certifying VA educational benefits
   A. The questionnaire logic only asked about certification satisfaction if the respondent indicated having utilized VA educational benefits during the 2017-2018 academic year
5. The degree in which the respondent is satisfied or dissatisfied with the VRC’s process for filing the CalVet Fee Waiver
   A. The questionnaire logic only asked about CalVet Fee Waiver satisfaction if the respondent indicated having utilized the CalVet Fee Waiver during the 2017-2018 academic year

The degree in which the respondent agrees or disagrees that the VRC staff are knowledgeable about campus policies and processes
CRITERIA OF SUCCESS
1. 80% were informed of academic support resources (such as on-campus tutoring, the student veteran lounge, VRC computer lab, VRC free printing, etc.)
2. 80% utilized at least one (1) academic support resource during the 2017-2018 academic year
3. 80% who utilized at least one (1) academic support resource agree or strongly agree that it positively affected their academic success
4. 80% who utilized VA educational benefits during fall 2017 and spring 2018 were satisfied with the VRC’s process for certifying VA educational benefits
5. 80% who utilized the CalVet Fee Waiver were satisfied with the VRC’s process for filing the CalVet Fee Waiver
6. 80% agree or strongly agree that the VRC staff are knowledgeable about campus policies and processes.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS
99% (174 of 176 respondents) provided academic support data; however, the sample sizes for questions regarding VA certification or CalVet Fee Waivers are smaller because the questionnaire only surveyed respondents who utilized the service. Of those surveyed:
1. 78% (135 of 174) were informed of academic development resources (such as on-campus tutoring, the student veteran lounge, VRC computer lab, VRC free printing, etc.)
2. 79% (138 of 174) utilized at least one (1) academic support resource during the 2017-2018 academic year
3. 75% (102 of 137) who utilized at least one (1) academic support resource agree or strongly agree that it positively affected their academic success
4. 88% (43 of 58) who utilized VA educational benefits during fall 2017 and spring 2018 were satisfied with the VRC’s process for certifying VA educational benefits
5. 89% (46 of 52) who utilized the CalVet Fee Waiver were satisfied or very satisfied with the VRC’s process for filing the CalVet Fee Waiver

80% (128 of 161) agree or strongly agree that the VRC staff are knowledgeable about campus policies and processes.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS
In addition to the data analysis above, the questionnaire also allowed respondents to provide qualitative responses for how to improve the VRC’s academic support. Based on all of the data available, the following improvement actions have been identified:
1. Maximize the Potential of the VRC’s New Space
   Increasing the VRC’s space is a common theme throughout all qualitative responses; however, it was the most predominant recommendation for improving students’ academic success. A need for increased space has been a reoccurring theme for years, and we will be fortunate for the opportunity to provide a larger space beginning sometime this summer. It will be critical for the VRC to utilize the new space to its maximum potential. The following strategies may help the VRC maximize its new space:
   A. Ensure students have a quiet space to study
      • “Have a quiet space for vets that want to do HW or study”
      • “Need a bigger space and somewhere that is quiet so studying at the VRC is possible”
B. Ensure students have a separate space for social interaction
   - “Get a bigger room so more veterans can relax. It feels crowded whenever I visit the VRC”
   - “The lounge and computer lab are too close. Everyone always talks so loud, watching videos or something. So it is hard to work on anything in the lab.”

C. Use the space to promote the VRC’s mission and values
   - Have clear messaging in the center promoting key messages from the communication plan (i.e. diversity, inclusivity, respect, etc.)

2. Implement a Comprehensive Communication Plan
   Ensuring the VRC clearly communicates its resources, events, and opportunities is the most common theme across all qualitative responses. When students utilize the VRC’s services, they mostly agree that the experience is beneficial. Despite the center’s efforts to inform all students, there are still a number of individuals who indicate that they are not informed, or that they are informed in an untimely manner. As a result, the VRC could benefit from carefully developing and implementing a strategy that effectively communicates its many services, including academic support, to all students.

3. Maintain Staff Effectiveness
   Another common theme for improving academic support is to ensure the VRC’s full-time and part-time staff members remain knowledgeable, effective, and motivated in their positions. The qualitative responses provided a number of improvement recommendations, including:
   A. Connect with academic advisors to provide support or training on veteran benefits
      - “Hire a Full-time Academic Advisor with knowledge of the special needs of Veteran populations”
   B. Ensure staff are motivated in their positions
      - “Keep motivated persons on staff every semester”
   C. Maintain the center’s student-centered strategy
      - “Every student is different, with different educational goals. The help should be tailored to the student’s goal”
   D. Smile and be friendly
      - “It would help if the VRC staff would smile once in a while”

4. Collaborate with Campus Partners to Provide Academic Skills-Focused Workshops
   A number of students suggest increasing the amount of academic skills-focused workshops. Examples of potential workshops include:
   A. Financial Aid and Other Financial Assistance
      - “Continue to educate VRC students with further financial aid and programs”
   B. Hard Skill Development
      - “Please provide us with tangible skills workshop such as: how to use Excel, Outlook, Adobe, etc.”

5. Refer Students to Campus Tutoring Resources
   A number of students recommended providing in-house tutoring services at the VRC. Although the VRC does not have the capacity to provide tutoring internally, it may benefit the center to remain knowledgeable of campus resources (i.e. Supplemental Instruction Program) in order to refer students when appropriate
A. “I would recommend hiring tutors for mathematics or economics, since these courses tend to be more difficult”

6. Maintain Our Commitment to Inclusivity

It is important for the VRC to continue its work of intentionally developing and supporting a culture of inclusivity for all students. Qualitative responses from the academic-support section identify two necessary strategies for ensuring the VRC’s commitment to an inclusive environment:

A. Effectively inform military-connected individuals that they are welcome in the VRC community
   • “Be more open to activities with dependents. I know there are a lot of us that go to school here and it would be great if we could all be connected. Theres something about dependents that always makes a strong knit community”
   • “Making the center more inclusive to dependents. There is a strong comradery amongst the vets and active duty students but not a lot of outreach towards dependents, like myself”

B. Effectively inform student veterans that the VRC values a culture of inclusivity, and that the center is required by campus policy to allow all students access to its services
   “I don't understand why students who are not vets or never had a mother or father in the military are allowed to use the Computers and print out work at the Vet Center. Sometimes they just crowd the computer room. Vets only! They did not earn this privilege. Before I transferred from my junior college vets were the only ones allowed to use Vet Center.”