

Student Services Annual Department Report
Department: Vet Services

Humboldt State University

Enrollment Management and Student Affairs

Dean of Students

Student Access Services

Vet Services

Student Access Services Mission Statement

Mission Statement

Student Access Services is a multi-departmental unit that provides services and resources to protected student populations and the HSU community to promote academic success and personal achievement. To meet the unique and varied needs of those we serve, the Student Disability Resource Center, Veterans Enrollment Transition Services, and the Testing Center are all committed to ensuring fair and reasonable access, providing a comprehensive structure of support, and creating a campus environment that encourages inclusivity and independence. Collectively, we value program efficiency, teamwork, and Universal Design.

Related Items

 1: Guide and Advise

Description of Goal

To guide and advise veterans and eligible dependents on maximizing access to and the use of VA benefits and financial resources.

1a: Timely, accurate, useful information and services

Type of Outcome: General Outcome

Learning Domain:

Description of Outcome

The VETS office staff will provide VA students timely, accurate, and useful information regarding all VA educational benefits, tuition assistance, and financial resources.

Measurement Strategy: Survey, Existing Data

Assessment Method

Quantify number of Vets & dependents advised, distribute satisfaction survey in the spring

-  Qualitative Surveys

Results of Assessment

Students and guests are asked to sign in to the office when they come in. A quick tally of the sign up sheets, shows 541 students seen in 14-15. 54% were veterans, 39% dependents and 6% "other". This doesn't capture phone calls, emails or if the students come in more than once a day.

The surveys were sent out late via email, approx April, and therefore we only received a handful of surveys. There is a common theme around the office location and recognition as a cultural group on campus. Our services and transition program are well received and utilized.

Next year, we may add our survey questions to the Student Access Services survey to improve timeliness and distribution.

Conclusions

One fulltime staff person served 540 walk in students last year. With only one staff member to serve this many students the quality of service is not optimal. The number of responses we received showed services and programming are satisfactory and information dissemination is satisfactory. However, this outcome will be studied further next year to determine the level of satisfaction with our students. The survey will be distributed earlier in the term to capture the data.

1b : Utilize technology to improve services

Type of Outcome: General Outcome

Learning Domain:

Description of Outcome

The VETS Office will utilize technology to improve access to benefit and financial resources.

Measurement Strategy: Observation, Other

Assessment Method

Provide a narrative to list technology improvements and impact to office efficiencies.

Results of Assessment

HSU VETS purchased a Surface 3 and uploaded fillable intake forms. We're waiting for a work order to be processed to install a "lock down" for the Surface on the front desk. It reduces paper and time spent on scanning, saving, and uploading documents.

Our website will further enhance our information dissemination and outreach processes once complete.

All Computers were replaced and updated which saves time and reduces errors due to computers freezing or dropping users.

Conclusions

We are continuing to look at processes and forms to convert to electronic submissions and contacts.

The Surface 3 provides tools for electronic processes and access to the server while off campus.

2: Transition Support

Description of Goal

To support veteran students as they transition from military to civilian life.

2a: Persistence, Retention and graduation rates

Type of Outcome: General Outcome

Learning Domain:

Description of Outcome

Student Veteran and dependent persistence, retention and graduation rates will be commensurate or above HSU traditional students.

Measurement Strategy: Existing Data

Assessment Method

IR will provide the graduation and retention rates.

Results of Assessment

Veterans retention rates are slightly higher than traditional students for upper and lower division students.

Graduation rates are lower for lower division veterans and only slightly lower for upper division veterans compared to traditional students.

- [Retention and Graduation Rates \(1\)](#)

Conclusions

Student veterans are doing well academically as an underrepresented minority with the current student support program and resources.

2b.: Transition to Student life

Type of Outcome: General Outcome

Learning Domain:

Description of Outcome

Veterans and Dependents who participate in the Transition Outdoor Wilderness Program will successfully transition to student life.

Measurement Strategy: Survey, Other

Assessment Method

Survey will be distributed at the conclusion of the program. Participant feedback will be gathered as a group during closing of the program.

Results of Assessment

Even though the program was severely modified to accommodate weather and fire, the students were pleased with their experience and the addition of spouses, significant others or family members to the group. Participants reported high levels of contentedness with the group. Logistically, they reported it was well organized. The non-veterans learned about military culture and felt included in the group. This group continues to be enrolled at HSU.

-  2014 Surveys

Conclusions

Our transition program is powerful and effective in assisting veterans to relearn and reapply the tools they learn in the military to civilian life. Camaraderie and support systems are reinforced and transition to student life is shorter and the students adaptive.

These groups help bridge the gap of isolation and loneliness for our student veterans and dependents when moving to Humboldt County while introducing them to the beauty of our environment.

This program will continue to evolve and invite veteran support persons to participate. Creating a sense of belonging is and will continue to be a focus of the program.

3: Inclusive and responsive environment

Description of Goal

13. To create a campus environment that is inclusive of and responsive to the needs of veterans.

3a.: Inclusive learning environment

Type of Outcome: General Outcome

Learning Domain:

Description of Outcome

Veteran and Dependents will report that the HSU Campus learning environment is safe and inclusive.

Measurement Strategy: Survey

Assessment Method

Survey distributed during spring semester

Results of Assessment

Based on the surveys and observation, Veterans do not feel included or recognized by the administration at HSU. The survey will be more widely distributed next year to gather more data.

-  Surveys

Conclusions

In addition to our studies, there were meetings and conversation with a representative from the Diversity and Inclusion focus group, President Rossbacher and Vice President Blake about the poor 1st impression of our office location for our parents and new students. Continuing students voiced their concerns with the location of VETS not providing opportunity for the population to meet other veterans, talk about student issues and support each other.

The 2nd concern is the official recognition of veterans and military culture at HSU.

This will be an ongoing priority for the VETS Office next year.

VETS Mission Statement

Mission Statement

Assist and nurture the integration of each individual student's military experiences, leadership skills & diversity to enhance their academic experience and join our student life by promoting the understanding of social, economic and environmental issues. Each student will continue to contribute to society and ultimately their professional lives.

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Staffing and Budget Snapshot

Investments

-  [Budget snapshot](#)
-  [Staffing](#)

Related Items

There are no related items.

End of Year Summary

Summary and Conclusions

VETS services and programming is satisfactory according to the small number of responses collected.

The Transition program is successful in assisting with transition and more specifically camaraderie, leadership, team building and skill building (four objectives of the program).

The staffing in VETS is primarily VA workstudy students. We could improve services by adding a .5 to a fulltime position that would allow for better service, more programming and clerical support of the staff.

The issues of location and recognition of the veterans and military culture came up during discussions this year. A basic understanding of military culture and our veterans needs as an underrepresented population are paramount to meeting our students where they "are" as opposed to asking them to acclimate to an environment that seems potentially harmful to some. VETS will continue to focus on these issues for 15-16.

Next Steps and Plans for Improvement

Continue discussions to recognize, educate non veterans and advocate for our population.

Seek outside funding through grants to expand transition program, staffing and technology.

Work on proposals for a different space or location.

Related Items

There are no related items.