



**Student Services
Program Review 2009-2012**

Section 1 is due by October 6, 2009

PROGRAM AREA: Veterans Office

Program Philosophy: The mission of the Veterans First Program is to provide information and assistance to eligible Veterans in applying for and in receiving Veterans' educational benefits. Essential to the mission is providing clear and adequate information regarding the GI-Bill benefits process and to ensure required documentation and certifications of benefits are processed in a timely manner. A primary responsibility of the Veterans First Program is to certify a student veteran's enrollment each semester thereby approving the courses as meeting the criteria for veterans benefits eligibility. To ensure compliance with Title 38 regulations, the Veterans First Program monitors the student veteran's enrollment, evaluates the progress made toward the stated educational goal and reports discrepancies in a timely manner.

The Veterans First Program strives to connect and/or refer the student veteran to appropriate college and community resources that will assist them in their successful transition from military to college. Educating the campus and the community about the unique needs of the veteran student population is an ongoing commitment that helps promote collaborative work that will augment services currently provided.

Progress on Goals, Objectives (2005-2009):

1. Investigate possibility of developing the Veterans' Program to include more comprehensive support services.

An official Veterans Program was established in the Spring 2009 when the position of Veterans Coordinator was approved. A dedicated Veterans Coordinator and a program space were key program milestones that ensured continued momentum to building strong veteran support services. In Fall 2009, collaboration was developed between the Concord Vet Center Office and Las Positas College to provide readjustment counseling services on campus.

Before the Veterans Program was established, a work group was created to assess current support services offered to our veterans. An online survey was administered to current veterans for feedback in determining future program direction. Researched and gathered data and information from various community colleges, local, state, and federal Veterans'

organizations. Expanded collaborative work with community organizations (Blue Star Moms, VFW, etc.) as well as the statewide veteran's project - Troops to College. These steps helped to establish and support the need for a comprehensive Veterans Program on campus.

2. Develop outreach and inreach plan to promote the Veterans' Office and to increase awareness of services available.

To promote the Veterans Program and increase awareness of services available, program staff have participated in numerous workshops and community events. Periodically an inreach table is placed on campus to respond to questions and offer assistance to student veterans unfamiliar with the program. Two locations have been established as key areas for Veterans: the Veterans Office and the Veterans Hub. The Veterans Office is the key place to obtain information on Veterans resources and services. The Veterans Hub is a designated room in which times are set aside specifically for Veterans only. Veterans have a place to study, relax, and network with other Veterans. This is a key area to post and provide information from the Veterans Office. * Update: The Veterans Office moved to a new location which is the entrance point to the new Veterans Resource Center. The Veterans Resource Center is an expansion of the Veterans Hub. This location will not only house a Veterans lounge, but also an area for studying, computer access, workshops, tutorial area, etc.

Operation Gateway continues to be a successful college orientation for new student veterans enrolled in the Fall semester. Las Positas College continues to be one of a handful of community colleges offering such an extensive overview of college and community resources that are available to support the student veteran in their transition.

The Veterans Program also does a significant amount of outreach to local community and Veteran organizations by networking and presenting to these groups. Program staff have participated in many outreach events from Congress McNerney's Veterans workshop event to the Concord Veterans fair. Additional community events: Castro Valley Rotary Chili Cook-Off, Castro Valley parade, Veterans Day Recognition by the Golden State Warriors, etc.

A Community Advisory group has been established to provide community partners with continuous feedback on student veteran's issues and program needs. The meetings present an opportunity to provide information as well as receive input and suggestions from Community Groups.

3. Identify more accurately the College's veteran student population.

This is an on-going process. A comprehensive report that captures data from Veterans who self-identify on their application (CCCApply) or through registration (a mandatory question appears when students register for classes). In addition, this report also includes veterans who are receiving benefits and are noted in Banner with a specific attribute data code. This has been a huge step forward in identifying all veterans besides and not just those who are certified for benefits.

4. Promote activities and/or events that demonstrated the College's commitment to all Veterans.

Las Positas College has hosted and supported various events demonstrating the College's commitment to all Veterans. Events such as honoring Veterans day on campus to hosting Operation Gateway demonstrate this commitment. The college has committed resources to hire a full time Veterans Coordinator to assist Veterans. This was a huge demonstration of commitment for services for veteran.

5. Build partnerships with agencies to increase general knowledge of local, state and federal services available to the Veterans (i.e., housing, mental health, benefits, etc.).

The Veterans First Program established part of its foundation on building relationships with local, state, and federal veteran agencies. The program has developed a strong connection with the California Troops to College. This has allowed the College to link with Veterans agencies, other colleges with great veteran services, as well as with the various military branches. Another strong partnership developed has been with both the Palo Alto VA and the Concord Veterans Center. These are great resources for mental health and other health resources. Currently a MOU has been issued to have a VA counselor from Concord Veterans center provide transitional services for our Veterans on campus.

Program Information

Staffing: *Dean of Enrollment Services – Sylvia Rodriguez*
1 FT Veterans Coordinator – Todd Steffan
 Veterans Work-study student
 Veteran Student and Community Liaison (hourly position funded through the Foundation)
 1 PT Readjustment Counselor – provided and funded by the Concord Veterans Center

Location: Rm 1000

Services: Priority registration for ALL Veterans;
 GI Bill Application and Certification of GI Benefits;
 Various scholarships such as LPC Veterans First Scholarships;
 Operation Gateway: A Veteran's Transition to Success;
 Las Positas College Veterans Book Loan Program;
 Veterans Resource Center – A place to relax, study, or hang out with other Veterans;
 Veteran Mentorship Program;
 Job Links: Links and network of full time and part time jobs;
 Student positions on campus through both federal and VA Workstudy programs;

Program Components:

	<u>2007-2008</u>	<u>2008-2009</u>	<u>2009-2010</u>
Number of Students Served: (with VA benefits)	129	144	178

	<u>2007-2008</u>	<u>2008-2009</u>	<u>2009-2010</u>
Budget:	0	0	0

1. What is the program's connection/dialogue to other programs?

The Veterans First Program works closely with Counseling, Admissions and Records, and Financial Aid. Future planning includes strengthening collaboration with the tutorial center, transfer center, and disability services. There has been preliminary discussion on building collaboration between the One Stop and the Veterans Program to provide student veterans with important information on careers, training, etc. A Memo of Understanding (MOU) with the Concord Vet Center was Board approved Fall 2009. This agreement provides a dedicated VA counselor from the Concord Vet Center to be available on campus. This professional specializes in readjustment counseling and is very knowledgeable on available community services that support a veterans transition from military life.

2. Please describe the status of Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) for your program.

Veterans program did not become a program until Spring 2009. No SLO was developed.

3. Provide a summary of current and future programmatic challenges. Use this to provide supporting data/information for requested increased resources.

1. A permanent full-time position (who is a veteran) who can mentor student veterans, provide support with processing benefits, and continue to strengthen community partnerships and outreach efforts.
2. Adequate academic counseling services specifically focused on the student veteran population. Provide direct and accessible academic planning to increase retention and student veteran success rates.
3. Adequate and identifiable program space for an increasing student veteran population. This is a critical component in creating a welcoming location for our veterans as they transition from military to college life. The primary goal would be to create a one-stop resource center.
4. Increase the student veterans' involvement in program development. An on-going challenge is to continually reach out to a student population that oftentimes is reluctant to seek support.

Section 2 is due by February 26, 2010

Point of Service Surveys:

Number of surveys gathered: 34

Date range of survey(s): October 2009

Attach copy of survey in Appendix.

Program Strengths Identified (utilizing survey data):

1. Responsive to student Veterans needs by providing assistance in answering questions accurately and in a timely manner.
2. Provided satisfying and helpful service to student Veterans seeking assistance from the Veterans First program via one on one interaction, website, and group workshops.

3. Connected with community resources and services to assist student Veterans with additional services and programs. Example - Readjustment Counselor from the Concord Vet Center on campus, community workgroups, various Veteran scholarships, etc.
4. Developed opportunities for student Veterans to network and socialize with each other through the Student Veterans Organization and the Veterans Hub in Room 1602. The "Hub" is a location in which Veterans can relax, study, and hang out with other Veterans

Areas of Improvement Identified (utilizing survey data):

1. Need a secure, confidential, and a safe location in which student Veterans feel comfortable in expressing needs and issues that they may have. Current office location is open and does not allow confidentiality.
2. Provide more workshops and information session to teach and train student Veterans on knowledge of College services and GI Bill benefits. Advise on the responsibilities in maintaining and eligibility of Veteran Benefits through the GI Bill (Veteran Affairs Educational Benefits).
3. Have a permanent location on campus dedicated specifically for student Veterans. Place that provides an area to relax, study, and connect with other Veterans. Current location is temporary and available for specific times during the week.
4. Need adequate staffing to provide services and programs for Veterans. Need additional support to work with community, certify increasing Veteran pop. benefits, funding raising, counseling, etc
5. Have adequate access to academic counseling for services such as Veteran Evaluation of Courses (required by VA)

Section 3 – Goal Matrix completed by March 31, 2010

1. Provide informational workshops on resources available to student Veterans on and off campus. Train Veterans on the responsibilities and requirements of Veterans Educational Benefits as well as maintain these benefits.
2. Develop additional tools to more accurately identify the College's student Veterans population. Data driven information will assist the program in developing more services to meet the needs of this diverse student population.
3. Promote and market the Veterans First Program to serve as a model program throughout the state. Develop outreach and in reach plans to prospective and current student Veterans.
4. Provide a welcoming and inviting environment for veterans to help ease their transition to college by creating a secure, confidential, and inviting area for student Veterans in which they feel comfortable expressing needs and issues that they may have.
5. Increase Academic Success Rate of Veterans through the utilization of workshops, resources available on campus, increase access to counseling with academic plans.



**Student Services Program Review
Action Plan Template
2010-2011**

I. Objective (Formerly Target):

Increase Academic Success Rate of Veterans through the utilization of workshops, resources on campus, and increase access to counseling with academic plans

II. Plan to Accomplish the Objective:

Plan:			
Activity		Timeline	Responsibility
a.	Workshops – time management, tutoring, resume/cover letter writing	Throughout Spring 11 – On-going	Veterans Program Staff
b.	Working with counseling and evaluations to develop better methods of completing Veteran Evaluations	Spring 11 On going	Veterans Program Staff Counselors Evaluators
c.	Implement mid-term progress reports.	Mid Spring	Veterans Program Staff

III. How Will You Measure the Effectiveness of This Objective?

Survey – beginning and end of term. Review Grades. Request mid term progress reports from student Veterans who have a history of poor grades.

Better methods to see more student Veterans by counseling as well as providing easy accessible evaluations of courses and requirements

IV. How Does This Objective Relate To/Support the College’s Strategic Plan 2010-2015?

Provide excellent in teaching, student learning, and services to students by providing the resources and tools to assist with their needs in achieving academic success.

V. Estimated Resource Requirement

Category	Description	Estimated Cost (if known)
Personnel	Experts in servicing and assisting Veterans, myself	
Supplies		
Facilities		
Other		



**Student Services Program Review
Action Plan Template
2010-2011**

I. Objective (Formerly Target):

Develop additional tools to accurately identify the College's student Veterans Populations. This will allow better ability to outreach both internally and externally the Veterans population.

II. Plan to Accomplish the Objective:

Plan:			
Activity		Timeline	Responsibility
a.	Continue to modify current Veteran Database	Throughout Spring 11 – On-going	Veteran Program Staff
b.	Research data research methods implemented at other colleges.	Spring 11 On going	Veteran Program Staff

III. How Will You Measure the Effectiveness of This Objective?

Comparison of school database, VA database, and my own data base to determine accuracy. Continue follow-up with Veterans utilizing database.

IV. How Does This Objective Relate To/Support the College's Strategic Plan 2010-2015?

Ensure highest level of service to students (Veterans) by being able to identify who they are as well as link the resources and services the Veterans Program provides with the student Veterans.

Expand the institution's capacity to apply resources to meet the needs of students

V. Estimated Resource Requirement

Category	Description	Estimated Cost (if known)
Personnel	Program Coordinator and 2 VA workstudy student	
Supplies		
Facilities		
Other		



**Student Services Program Review
Action Plan Template
2010-2011**

I. Objective (Formerly Target):

Promote and market the Veterans First Program to serve as a model program throughout the state

II. Plan to Accomplish the Objective:

Plan:			
Activity		Timeline	Responsibility
a.	Develop outreach materials on services and programs available	On-going	Veterans Program Staff
b.	Expand program activities to promote program Work with District PR Department to cover events and success stories of Veterans	Fall 10 & Spring 11	Veterans Program Staff
c.	Link community Veteran Groups and the Veterans First Program. Annual workshop with community groups. Cont' to build relations with CA Troops to College Initiative program.	Fall 10 ,Spring 11 – Fall 11 On- going	Veterans Program Staff

III. How Will You Measure the Effectiveness of This Objective?

Increase number of Veterans and increased program “visibility”. Survey given beginning of term to determine effectiveness of outreach.

IV. How Does This Objective Relate To/Support the College’s Strategic Plan 2010-2015?

Serve as catalyst for enhanced community life through outreach, partnerships, services, and activities through out the Tri-Valley

V. Estimated Resource Requirement

(Please indicate if resources are needed “one time” or if they are ongoing.)

Category	Description	Estimated Cost (if known)
Personnel	Program Coordinator	
Supplies	Materials – brochures/flyers	2000
Facilities		
Other		



**Student Services Program Review
Action Plan Template
2010-2011**

I. Objective (Formerly Target):

Provide a welcoming and supportive environment for Veterans to help ease their transition to college.

II. Plan to Accomplish the Objective:

Plan:			
Activity		Timeline	Responsibility
a.	Continued development of Veterans Office – facility, support staff and counseling services	On-going	Veterans Program Staff
b.	Development of Veteran Service Center with emphasis on fundraising and awareness of a need for a Veterans Resource Center	On-going	Veterans Program Staff
c.	Cont' to build programs such as Operation Gateway – transition program for Veterans. Cont' to expand services from the Concord Vets Center and Livermore VA on campus.	On-going	Veterans Coordinator, Veterans Program Staff, Concord Vet Center Readjustment Counselor, Veteran Student Mentor

III. How Will You Measure the Effectiveness of This Objective?

Survey will be given in the beginning and end of term to measure veterans experience at the College. Expanded services such as increased counseling hours for veterans, implementing specialized software (Disability Services – Veterans Resource Project) to increase student success, and a designated space for veterans.

IV. How Does This Objective Relate To/Support the College's Strategic Plan 2010-2015?

Ensure highest level of services to students and community

V. Estimated Resource Requirement

(Please indicate if resources are needed "one time" or if they are ongoing.)

Category	Description	Estimated Cost (if known)
Personnel	Program Coordinator and VA Workstudy Students	
Supplies	Materials – brochures/flyers	
Facilities		
Other		

Program Review Type	Discipline/Unit (ex. CHEM, Research, Library, A&R, AUTO)	Division (Instructional Program Review Only)	What do you want to accomplish? (Objective)	How do you plan to accomplish this?	What is/are your measurement criteria? (How will you measure and document effectiveness?)	Which College Strategic Goal(s) does this objective address? (all that apply 1-10)	Does this objective address an Accreditation Recommendation or Planning Agenda?	When do you plan to start?	What resources will this take? (all that apply)	What Institutional Process/Committee/Office will you need? (all that apply)	Specify if Other process	Prioritized
Student Services	Veterans	Student Services	Increase Academic Success Rate of Veterans through the utilization of workshops, resources on campus, and increase access to counseling with academic plans	The utilization of workshops, resources on campus, and increase access to counseling with academic plans	Survey – beginning and end of term. Review Grades. Request mid term progress reports from student Veterans who have a history of poor grades ; grade and retention data	3, 6, 9	Not sure	Spring 2011	Non-Financial, One time	Research/Evaluation	Cont' to build donations from Community groups to support various services, such as additional academic counseling hours for Veterans	High Priority
Student Services	Veterans	Student Services	Increase accuracy of data of Veterans attending LPC. This will allow better outreach and linkage of services/programs to Veterans	Develop additional tools to accurately identify the College's student Veterans Populations.	Comparison of school database, VA database, and my own data base to determine accuracy. Continue follow-up with Veterans utilizing database.	3, 6	Not sure	Fall 2010	Non-Financial, Ongoing			High Priority

Student Services	Veterans	Student Services	Educate Veterans on their responsibilities, requirements, and how to continue maintaining benefits when receiving Veterans Educational Benefits	Provide workshops and training on VA Educational Benefits and the academic requirements. Send reminders on VA academic requirements to student Veterans. More interactive Website, with VA academic requirements	Initial survey given in the beginning of the term. Follow up survey at the end. Also, will use the success rate of completing required course work and maintaining academic standards	3, 6, 8	Not sure	Spring 2011	Non-Financial, Ongoing	Research/Evaluation	High Priority	
Student Services	Veterans	Student Services	Promote and market the Veterans First Program. Become a model for other colleges to follow.	Develop interactive outreach materials. Link with district PR dept. Continue to expand partnerships with Community groups, Troops to College Initiative, CA Community College Chancellors office	Increase number of Veterans and increased program "visibility". Survey given beginning of term to determine effectiveness of outreach.	3, 6, 8, 9		Fall 2010	Non-Financial, Ongoing and Financial One-time	Grants	Fund raising within Program and Community Groups	High Priority

Student Services	Veterans	Student Services	Provide a welcoming and supportive environment for Veterans to help ease their transition to college.	Continue to develop the Veterans Resource Center. Cont expanding programs such as Operation Gateway - transition program for Veterans	Survey will be given in the beginning and end of term to measure veterans experience at the College. Expanded services such as increased counseling hours for veterans, implementing specialized software (Disability Services - Veterans Resource Center Project) to increase student success, and a designated space for veterans.	3, 5, 9, 1	Not sure	Spring 2011	Financial, Ongoing, Non-Financial Ongoing	Grants, Fund raising within Program and Community Groups	Fund raising within Program and Community Groups	High Priority
------------------	----------	------------------	---	---	--	------------	----------	-------------	---	--	--	---------------