



Veterans Annual Unit Plan

STEP I: DESCRIBE YOUR DEPARTMENT/UNIT

a. Mission

The mission statement was developed as an offshoot of the A&R mission statement with an emphasis on staying informed about changing issues initiated by the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). A revisited mission statement is being prepared that will utilize Veteran Resource Centers (VRC) across the spectrum from other colleges in combination with the Student Services Executive Council (SSEC).

The mission of the Veterans Affairs Office (VAO) is to provide excellent quality service to our stakeholders who are our veteran students, faculty, staff, and the community. This service is characterized by friendliness, staying in touch with VA interpretation(s) of educational benefits, problem solving, fairness, and effective communication.

b. Program Applicability

The VAO, in close concert with other departments within student services, is organized around a one-stop mindset. In other words, even though counseling and financial aid are not within a proximate area, the VAO attempts to facilitate each other's processes so that students are served more completely and efficiently.

The VAO participates in extended orientation for veteran students that is hosted by the counseling department with the intention to familiarize vet students with the facilities and to help the students feel comfortable with sharing strategies and other issues. Also, this department works closely with the special services department at the College.

c. Partnerships

This program supports veteran students who are being supported by the VA [the Feds], the California Department of Veteran Affairs (CADVA), MyCAA (supporting spouses of active duty veterans), and tuition assistance for active duty personnel.

The VAO works with the Employment Development Department (EDD) for veteran student workers and others seeking full-time employment. In addition, the Veterans Resource Center, in Bakersfield, is helpful when Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) issues are encountered as well as providing information to veterans and their families on other veteran benefits.

c. Distance Education

Over 50% of the College's veteran population use distance education in their pursuit of receiving an education. Most of the contact with all veterans is



through the telephone and a smaller percentage via email. The website is a help (and a hindrance that will be addressed in the section for goals) that gives prospective vet/students the required information for setting up their benefit package for the VA. Many times, this information is given over the phone that, at least, enables the vet/student to seek guidance from the VA or a counselor. When all else fails, the office to the VAO is always open on a drop-in basis and many veteran students utilize this methodology for obtaining information. The VAO maintains an email list serve that has enabled the College to distribute news of events at the College or announce new contacts that can be of a benefit for some of life's issues that may be encountered.

STEP 2: EXPLAIN YOUR PLANNING

a. Review of Past Goals

- **A fully operational list serve for veterans has been renewed and updated** – Partners in the community (EDD) have come to rely on this ability to help them solve employment issues
- **Hired two VA student workers as peer mentors and helping to complete the necessary processing of certifications for vet/students for their educational benefits.**
- **The VAO has hosted A Veterans Recognition Day (during Veterans Day week) for the last two years.** Different venues have been attempted from a vet/student panel to a host of presenters distributing information for the benefit of veterans.
- **In the VAO, a “Wall of Fame” has been in place for about six months; this wall hosts pictures of vet/students and vet faculty (in their younger days)**
- **In conjunction with the counseling department, an information flyer has been generated that also serves as a check-off list that gives vet/students phone numbers for the College and vet services throughout the state and country.**



b. Review of Overall Department/Unit

[What needs/opportunities did your last program review reveal? Did your most recent SLO assessments demonstrate gaps to be addressed? What is working with your unit? What improvements need to be made?]

- Veterans have shown a desire for more counseling time, whether it is in the form of orientation, strategies for successful living, or strategies for college transfer. An orientation is scheduled for November 15, 2011.
- On a recent survey, 60% of vet/respondents felt that accessing the College's website for veterans was user-friendly and only 80% of veterans felt that the web page provided information that was usable or useful. – The website, in general, needs to be updated to try and take the guesswork out of where services are provided and where the primary contacts are.
- The College was designated a military friendly school by GI Jobs in September 2011. This designation brings some responsibility to live up to that honor.
- This honor also has the potential to bring additional vet/students to the College programs. Two items that will contribute to upholding this honorable designation are (1) a more user-friendly website that is mobility enhanced; (2) continuing to set-up a veterans resource center (a club) on campus.
- The VAO has been able to sponsor two VA student workers, continuously for two years, who have worked at the IWV campus and the KRV campus.
- The Transition Action Program (TAP) program at the Naval Air Weapons Center- Weapons Division (NAWC-WD) has the potential to put the College in front of a large number of transitioning sailors who may be looking for some educational solutions.

c. Current Year Goals:

Goal 1 Veterans Resource Conference

Connection to College Strategic Goals: Continue to offer a veterans' resource conference at Veterans Day, with the intent to brainstorm ideas as to what the college can do for them to enrich and enhance their college experience. This will be accomplished by the active participation of vet/students and community veterans as well as speakers who can talk to different resources that they have to offer

Specific internal* or external condition(s) the goal is a response to:** Goal 6, Objectives, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 speak to the building of community connectedness, as vet students continue their education or are seeking employment in the high desert region. In addition, Goal 6 implies the VAO's desire to broaden its services to veterans and work toward a vet/services center of excellence as a military friendly school.

Action Plan: Different tactics are needed to attempt to motivate vet/students to participate in a resource conference or a vet club, if the College can show that their participation will bring value to their College experience. Through vet recognition day to collaborate with veterans about needed services and providing the recognition that many want. Debriefing sessions have been organized to attempt to cull different ideas from the mystery of why people in general participate or don't. The primary action point is the personal invitation or an RSVP system. Other ideas being framed include, inviting the vet/students family and have family resources available; or maybe a new/different event.



Measure of Success: *Providing and participating in these events provide success in and of themselves. Certainly, the more veterans who respond, the more complete and more variety the program can offer. Community involvement is certainly a dimension that is sought after and needed; the just-completed vets recognition day had a tremendous response from the community as evidenced by a write-up in the paper.*

Goal 2 An event honoring or raising money for spouses/families left behind

Connection to College Strategic Goals: *Through different partners, develop a community model of veterans' issues that has as its goal to help veterans/spouses left behind due to death or disability to the veteran loved one. [Goal 6, Obj. 6.2; 6.3]*

Specific internal* or external condition(s) the goal is a response to:** *Improved response to community needs in support of our mission as it relates to our diverse population and communities*

Action Plan: *(1) Try to develop a veteran resource center (vets club) that has as a central theme helping others to achieve their success; (2) Brainstorm through the veteran list serve, ideas that will resonate with them as students and members of the military brotherhood. Become more active in VFW, American Legion, and the new Veterans Action Committee being newly formed in Ridgecrest. Initiating and developing new information or design for the Cerro Coso website for veterans, that will dovetail with registration/waitlisting/inside CC communication.*

Measure of Success: *It will be interesting to see who and how many respond to the ideas and whether the center becomes driven by a person or the idea of helping other veterans. Actively seeking community outreach opportunities through the VFW, American Legion, and the Veteran Outreach Committee in the city.*

STEP 3: SUBSTANTIATE REQUESTED RESOURCES (Note: All items must be prioritized. Please see the attached Criteria for Prioritization of Resource Requests chart for a complete list of codes and explanations for prioritization.)

It is anticipated that the continuing usage of veteran student workers will be beneficial to the success of the VAO. A veteran resource center may become a reality if the anticipated reduction in force in Iraq does transpire.

It is not envisioned that additional resources, of a permanent variety, would be needed unless a veteran resource center becomes a reality



a. Classified Staffing N/A

Position Title	Position Description	Priority	Strategic Plan goal addressed by this position	Provide a detailed rationale for the requested position. The rationale should refer to your unit's mission and goals, recent Program Review or SLO assessment gaps, planning assumptions, and/or the College's Strategic Plan	Salary Grade	Number of Months	Number of Hours per Week	Salary Amount	Funding Source: G=General Fund R=Restricted (be specific)
a1.									
a2.									

Classified Staffing: Explain why the work of this position cannot be assigned to current staff

Classified Staffing: Describe impact on the college if the position is not filled

b. Full-Time Faculty Staffing

Position	Department	Location	Priority	Strategic Plan goal addressed by this position	Enrollment Data/Growth Trends	Full-time/Part-time Faculty Ratio	Productivity	Funding Source: G=General Fund R=Restricted (be specific)
b1.								
b2.								

Full-Time Faculty Staffing: Provide a detailed rationale for the requested position

[Your rationale should substantiate the priority you have placed on this request and should refer to such things as department's mission and goals, recent program review, SLO assessment results, external needs assessment, planning assumptions, College's Strategic Goals, etc.]



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c. Supplies (per unit cost less than \$500). Enter requests on lines below.

Resource	Describe resource requested	Priority	Strategic Plan goal addressed by this resource	Provide a detailed rationale for the requested resource. The rationale should refer to your unit's mission and goals, recent Program Review or SLO assessment gaps, planning assumptions, and/or the College's Strategic Plan	Estimated amount of funding requested	Will this be one-time or on-going funding?	Funding Source: G=General Fund R=Restricted (be specific)
c1.	Non Instructional Supplies	1A	Goal 4	Available for maintain VAO and the potential Veteran Resource Center	500	Ongoing	G
c2.	Food/Meetings	1A	Goals 4 & 6	Vets Recognition Day and a possible community event	1500	Ongoing	G
c3.	Institutional Dues	1A	Goal 6	WAVES membership	75	Ongoing	G
c4.							
c5.							

d. Non-Technology Equipment (per unit cost greater than \$500). Enter requests on lines below.

Resource	Describe resource requested	Priority	Strategic Plan goal addressed by this resource	Provide a detailed rationale for the requested resource. The rationale should refer to your unit's mission and goals, recent Program Review or SLO assessment gaps, planning assumptions, and/or the College's Strategic Plan	Estimated amount of funding requested	Will this be one-time or on-going funding?	Funding Source: G=General Fund R=Restricted (be specific)
d1.							
d2.							
d3.							
d4.							

e. Technology Equipment (computers, data projectors, document readers, etc.). Enter requests on lines below.

Resource	Describe resource requested	Priority	Strategic Plan goal addressed by this resource	Provide a detailed rationale for the requested resource. The rationale should refer to your unit's mission and goals, recent Program Review or SLO assessment gaps, planning assumptions, and/or the College's Strategic Plan	Estimated amount of funding requested	Will this be one-time or on-going funding?	Funding Source: G=General Fund R=Restricted (be specific)



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e1.							
e2.							
e3.							
e4.							

f. Facilities. Enter requests on lines below.

Resource	Describe resource requested	Priority	Strategic Plan goal addressed by this resource	Provide a detailed rationale for the requested resource. The rationale should refer to your unit's mission and goals, recent Program Review or SLO assessment gaps, planning assumptions, and/or the College's Strategic Plan	Estimated amount of funding requested	Will this be one-time or on-going funding?	Funding Source: G=General Fund R=Restricted (be specific)
f1.							
f2.							

g. Travel (inter-campus, intra-district, conferences, etc.). Enter requests on lines below.

Resource	Describe resource requested	Priority	Strategic Plan goal addressed by this resource	Provide a detailed rationale for the requested resource. The rationale should refer to your unit's mission and goals, recent Program Review or SLO assessment gaps, planning assumptions, and/or the College's Strategic Plan	Estimated amount of funding requested	Will this be one-time or on-going funding?	Funding Source: G=General Fund R=Restricted (be specific)
	Training and networking capability available through Western Association Veterans Educ. Specialist (WAVES)						
g1.	WAVES Conference 3 rd week of July	1A	Goal 4 & 6	With changes being implemented by the VA current info. is needed	2000	Ongoing	G
g2.	WAVES Regional Training in San Diego	1A	Goal 4 & 6	Emphasizes connectivity with Calif. WAVES schools	400	Ongoing	G
g3.							
g4.							
g5.							

h. Marketing (brochures, radio spots, promotional travel, etc.). Enter requests on lines below.



Resource	Describe resource requested For a community event to take place at the College, advertising will need to be initiated	Priority	Strategic Plan goal addressed by this resource	Provide a detailed rationale for the requested resource. The rationale should refer to your unit's mission and goals, recent Program Review or SLO assessment gaps, planning assumptions, and/or the College's Strategic Plan	Estimated amount of funding requested	Will this be one-time or on-going funding?	Funding Source: G=General Fund R=Restricted (be specific)
h1.	Community Event	1A	Goal 6	Part of a community outreach event	500	Ongoing	G
h2.							
h3.							

STEP 4: ATTACH LAST YEAR'S SLO ASSESSMENT DATA