



EL CAMINO COLLEGE
Veterans Resource Center
Program Review 2024



Threatt, Brenda
bthreatt@elcamino.edu

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Veteran Resource Center Program Review

Program Mission Statement/Program Overview

1. How does the program support the College's Mission and/or align to the Chancellor's Vision 2030?

The El Camino College Mission: El Camino College makes a positive difference in people's lives. We provide innovative and excellent comprehensive educational programs and services that promote student learning, equity, and success in collaboration with our diverse communities.

The Chancellor's Vision 2023: Vision 2030 focuses on the students and future learners impacted by increasing income inequality and poverty. These include veterans, people with low incomes, K-12 dual-enrollment students, foster youth, and students who are justice involved or justice impacted.

The Veteran Resource Center (VRC) program at El Camino College directly aligns with the college's mission and the Chancellor's Vision 2030 in several key ways:

Supporting Student Success and Equity:

The VRC provides tailored services and resources to assist student veterans in transitioning to civilian life and navigating the academic environment. By addressing their unique challenges and needs, the program promotes equity through individual veteran academic and support counseling, ensuring this diverse population has access to the support necessary for success.

Fostering Collaboration with Diverse Communities:

The Veteran Resource Center (VRC) cultivates collaborative relationships with a diverse array of veteran community organizations, encompassing individuals from various backgrounds, ethnicities, and life experiences. Through this engagement, the program develops comprehensive educational offerings tailored to address the specific needs of veteran students. Furthermore, the VRC has forged connections and collaborates with local elected officials, educational institutions, corporate and private businesses, and non-profit organizations. These partnerships enhance the VRC program's capacity by providing access to financial support, social assistance,

resources, and other collaborative efforts, all aimed at enriching the student veteran experience at El Camino College.

Addressing Income Inequality and Poverty:

Many veterans may face financial challenges or come from low-income backgrounds. The VRC assists veteran students in accessing financial aid, scholarships, and resources to alleviate financial burdens and promote their success, aligning with the Chancellor's Vision 2030 of supporting those impacted by income inequality and poverty with the following resources and support:

- 1. Food Pantry:** The VRC operates a food pantry to help address food insecurity among veteran students. This resource provides students with basic nutritional needs so they can focus on their studies.
 - 2. Computer Lab:** By offering a computer lab, the VRC ensures veteran students have access to technology and internet services for academic work, job searches, and accessing online resources.
 - 3. Financial Aid Counseling:** The VRC collaborates with financial aid staff to provide one-on-one financial aid counseling to help veteran students understand and access financial aid options, budget effectively, and manage debt.
 - 4. Academic Counseling:** Academic counselors at the VRC assist veteran students with academic planning, tutoring resources, and navigating challenges to promote their success.
 - 5. Social Support:** The VRC creates a community for veteran students to receive peer support, mentorships, and a sense of belonging during their transition to campus life.
 - 6. Employment Assistance:** The VRC connects veteran students to career services, job fairs, and networking opportunities to improve employment prospects after graduation.
 - 7. Comradeship:** By fostering a veteran community, the VRC provides a supportive environment of shared experiences to uplift one another providing an emotional support system that helps veterans students to endure.
 - 8. Mental Health:** Partnerships with U.S. VETS Outside the Wire Program, and El Camino College Student Health programs provide mental health services for all veterans in need.
- Overall, the comprehensive services at the Veterans Resource Center directly address income inequality and poverty among veteran students through access to basic needs, guidance,

community, encouragement, and pathways to future economic mobility.

Supporting a Diverse Student Population:

The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) acknowledges and embraces the diverse backgrounds and experiences within the veteran community. This includes veterans with disabilities, mental health concerns, or other unique requirements. By nature of its makeup, the United States Armed Forces is symbolically diverse. Consequently, veterans separating from the military and attending community college are a naturally diverse group, bonded by their military experience.

The VRC strives to cultivate an inclusive and inviting environment that serves as a safe haven for veterans, focusing on their unique need for comradeship and an understanding of the military experience. The VRC amenities such as a computer lab, cooked meals, opportunities for engaging conversations, comprehensive information, and tailored supportive services and resources. The center's mission aligns with the Chancellor's Vision 2030, which emphasizes supporting diverse student populations that may face additional challenges or barriers to success. In essence, the Veteran Services program plays a crucial role in upholding El Camino College's mission and the Chancellor's Vision 2030 by promoting student learning, equity, and success for the diverse veteran student population while addressing income inequality and poverty.

The VRC veteran services program plays a vital role in furthering the college's mission of positively impacting lives. It goes beyond catering to the educational requirements of veterans by fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of their unique experiences and contributions across the entire campus and wider community. The program offers innovative and comprehensive educational initiatives centered around military and American history, culture and community that enlighten and empower students and the broader community alike.

2. What are the strengths of the program?

The strengths of the program begin at the front door. Veterans are greeted from outside with a plaque and the American flag designating this area is dedicated to veterans. The VRC is an aesthetically pleasing space that is a well-equipped for the particular needs of veteran students.

Below is the front door of the VRC. To the right is the dedicated plaque and flag. The next image is the “heart” of the center where students meet and eat. The last image is the computer lab.



The Center houses a well -equipped and well-informed staff who address veteran academic needs, certifications, and to maintain compliance with Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). The Center also provides a host of wrap-around services that support the veterans’ social, mental-health, and financial needs as well.

The Center provides a comprehensive range of support services specifically designed to meet the unique needs of student veterans on campus. Some of the key services offered include:

1. **Computer lab and study space:** Dedicated facility for student veterans to study, work on assignments, look for employment and housing, and to have access academic resources.
2. **Assistance with navigating administrative processes:** Help with admissions, financial aid, academic advising, and using military education benefits like the GI Bill.
3. **Academic counseling:** Services to help student veterans plan their graduation, transfer, and career paths, enhancing their educational and professional goals.
4. **Social and mental health counseling:** Support for the transition to college life, addressing issues related to military service/deployments, and overcoming challenges like PTSD.
5. **Veteran-specific orientation programs:** Helping student veterans acclimate to the campus, community college processes, and available resources. Peer-to-peer mentoring and support for veteran students trying to manage life beyond the military community.
6. **Dedicated lounge and kitchen:** A space for student veterans to socialize, prepare meals, converse, plan activities, and foster a sense of camaraderie.
7. **Career services:** Assistance with job searches, job fairs, and connecting with employers who value the skills gained from military experience.
8. **Advocacy and awareness:** Raising awareness of the needs of the student veteran population

on campus and developing programs to educate the non-veteran community about the positive influence of student veterans.

The Center provides a comprehensive support system tailored to the unique experiences and needs of student veterans, helping them transition to college life, succeed academically, and prepare for their future careers.

3. **What are the challenges of the program?**

One of the primary obstacles faced by the Veteran Resource Center (VRC) program is the lack of adequate funding that would increase the capacity to provide comprehensive support services. The program's current staffing has been successful in actuating the plans of the previous program review, however, with the increased VA and governmental requirements and veteran student housing and food insecurities, the program is understaffed, limiting its ability to offer essential assistance in various critical areas:

1. Case Management: Student veterans may grapple with the transition from military to civilian life, including adapting to the academic environment, managing service-related disabilities or injuries, and coping with the psychological impacts of their service. Having dedicated case managers would help address these emotional and psychological barriers, facilitating a smoother transition and promoting overall success.

2. Mental Health Support: Student veterans often encounter unique personal and emotional challenges, such as adjusting to a structured academic setting, balancing family, and work responsibilities. Educating faculty and staff about the challenges faced by veteran students can help create a supportive academic environment. Furthermore, offering counseling and mental health services tailored specifically to the unique experiences and needs of veteran students is paramount. Specialized support acknowledges the complexities of their backgrounds and provides a safe space for them to address mental health concerns without stigma or judgment. Through such targeted interventions, the college can create an environment where student veterans feel valued, understood, and empowered to succeed both in their academic pursuits and personal well-being.

Providing counseling and mental health services specifically tailored to the unique experiences and needs of veteran students can help create a safe space for them to address mental health

concerns.

3. Housing Assistance: The high cost of housing and living expenses in Los Angeles County can lead to homelessness among student veterans. A housing navigator could provide invaluable guidance and resources, helping them secure affordable and stable housing options. Navigating the complex landscape of housing in a metropolitan area like Los Angeles can be overwhelming, especially for those who are already juggling the demands of coursework, work obligations, and potentially familial responsibilities. For student veterans, the added stress of housing instability can have profound effects on their academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being.

Introducing a housing navigator specifically tailored to the needs of student veterans could provide invaluable support in this regard. A housing navigator would serve as a knowledgeable guide, assisting student veterans in navigating the maze of housing options available to them. This could involve providing information on affordable housing programs, connecting them with rental assistance resources, and offering guidance on navigating the rental market. A housing navigator could also serve as an advocate for student veterans, helping them navigate any bureaucratic hurdles or challenges they may encounter during their housing search. By offering personalized support and guidance, a housing navigator can empower student veterans to make informed decisions about their housing situation and ultimately secure stable and affordable housing.

Beyond addressing immediate housing needs, the presence of a housing navigator can also contribute to the overall well-being and academic success of student veterans. By alleviating the stress and uncertainty associated with housing instability, student veterans can better focus on their studies and fully engage in campus life.

4. Career Counseling: As student veterans prepare to enter the workforce, they may benefit from workforce development counseling. As student veterans transition from academic life to the workforce, they encounter a unique set of challenges and opportunities. While their military service endows them with a range of valuable skills and experiences, navigating the civilian job market can still be daunting. To facilitate a successful transition, student veterans can greatly benefit from workforce development counseling.

Workforce development counseling tailored to the needs of student veterans serves as a crucial bridge between their military service and civilian careers. This type of support goes beyond

traditional career counseling by specifically addressing the nuances of transitioning from military to civilian employment:

- **Skill Development:** Workforce development counseling helps student veterans identify and develop the skills necessary for success in the civilian workforce. This may include refining communication skills, learning to translate military experience into civilian terms, and acquiring new technical skills relevant to their desired career paths.
- **Job Exploration:** Many student veterans may be uncertain about which career paths align with their interests, values, and skills. Workforce development counseling provides guidance and resources to explore various job opportunities, including internships, apprenticeships, and entry-level positions. Counselors can help student veterans research industries, evaluate job prospects, and identify potential employers.
- **Resume' and Interview Preparation:** Crafting a compelling resume and performing well in job interviews are essential components of the job search process. Workforce development counseling equips student veterans with the tools and strategies needed to create professional resumes, tailor them to specific job applications, and effectively communicate their qualifications during interviews.
- **Networking and Professional Development:** Building a professional network is crucial for advancing one's career. Workforce development counseling teaches student veterans how to network effectively, both in person and online, and provides opportunities to connect with alumni, employers, and industry professionals. Additionally, counselors may offer workshops and seminars on topics such as leadership development, personal branding, and career advancement.
- **Career Planning and Goal Setting:** Setting clear career goals is essential for guiding one's job search and professional development efforts. Workforce development counselors work with student veterans to define their career objectives, create actionable plans to achieve them, and track their progress over time. This process helps student veterans stay focused and motivated as they work

towards their desired career outcomes.

Overall, workforce development counseling plays a vital role in empowering student veterans to successfully transition from the military to civilian workforce. By providing tailored support and resources, counselors enable student veterans to identify career opportunities, develop essential skills, and pursue fulfilling careers aligned with their interests and qualifications. This support would assist them in developing essential career skills, exploring job opportunities, and securing desired careers aligned with their interests and qualifications.

5. VA Benefits Counseling: Navigating the complex system of veterans' benefits, such as the GI Bill, disability compensation, and healthcare services, can be daunting. A dedicated VA benefits counselor (from the V.A.) would ensure student veterans have access to these resources and receive effective guidance in utilizing their entitled benefits.

The VRC program faces challenges in promoting a supportive campus-wide environment for veteran students that is welcoming, and inclusive outside of the VRC. The VRC attempts to move in conjunction with other affinity groups in creating a campus where all feel understood and appreciated. When there is a lack of awareness or understanding among the broader campus community, as was demonstrated when the VRC proposed a community plaque dedicated to veterans, there can be undue adversity towards veteran students and veteran programs. Biases have the potential to adversely affect veterans' programs structurally and fiscally. Additionally, fostering a supportive community and network on campus, where student veterans can connect with peers who share similar experiences, is essential for their success and well-being.

Increased funding and resources are needed to provide comprehensive support to veteran students and to undergird the work of the VRC in the mission of El Camino College and the Chancellor's 2030 Vision.

Previous Program Review

4. What were the recommendations identified in the previous program review process?

The previous program review recommended:

1. An institutionalized program director to oversee student retention, success, Guided Pathways, and community networking.

2. An additional counselor.
3. A full-time Student Services Technician to manage administrative tasks, fiscal matters, and data analysis.

The identified equipment needs were:

- A plasma television for the sitting room
- Scanners
- An ADA-compliant computer station
- A color printer

5. List the outcomes/activities created to address these recommendations in your previous program review.

One of the recommendations was to hire a Program Director. An assistant program director was hired however, the position is grant funded and not institutionalized. Additionally, in interacting with other agencies, corporations, and funders, the “*Assistant Director*” is not always considered as a decision-maker or invited to discussions regarding veteran students. The position should be one of “Director” and, as an integral part of serving veterans and the veteran program, needs to be institutionalized.

The integration of veteran services into the Guided Pathways model by the assistant director signifies a strategic effort to enhance support for veteran students through a comprehensive and structured approach to academic and career success. The assistant director has taken a proactive role in aligning veteran services with Guided Pathways by leading staff members and veteran students in various Guided Pathways events and initiatives.

The assistant director has ensured that staff members involved in veteran services are trained in the principles and practices of Guided Pathways. This training has included workshops, seminars, and professional development sessions focused on understanding the core components of Guided Pathways, such as clarifying paths, helping students choose and enter a pathway, keeping students on the path, and ensuring that learning is taking place.

The assistant director utilizes data and analytics to track the progress and outcomes of veteran students within the Guided Pathways framework. By collecting and analyzing data on veteran student enrollment, retention, completion rates, and post-graduation outcomes, the program can

identify areas for improvement and make data-informed decisions to enhance support services and pathways for veteran students.

The Assistant Director has connected the VRC to outside communities: veteran services organizations, local elected officials, the Torrance Chamber of Commerce, military organizations, local tech industry corporations and the local neighborhood community. The Assistant Director has connected veteran programs to the rest of the campus (faculty, staff, and students) through hosting veteran events and programs.

The other recommendations were the following:

Staffing:	Counseling staffing was not increased with a direct hire however, we have been able to augment the one full-time counselor with 12-hours per week of part-time general counselors. The need for 2 dedicated full-time counselors still exists. We were not given the financial capacity to hire a full-time office administrator, however, we have 2 part-time office staff. The need for a full-time administrator, in addition to the part-time administrator still exists.
Equipment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A plasma TV was purchased and installed in the Center.• Scanners were purchased for staff.• A color printer was acquired for the Center.• An ADA computer station was created within the computer lab.

Program Assessment

Where applicable, include qualitative and quantitative data and cite sources of the data. Areas to consider for program assessment may include: [Student Services Dashboard](#), [Student Success Metrics](#), course success & completion, retention, degrees, and customer service survey findings.

6. How many students, faculty and/or staff does the program serve annually?

The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) plays a crucial role in supporting the veteran community on campus. The staff diligently records the number of contacts made with veterans and the sources of these contacts on a daily basis. This meticulous data tracking is an essential endeavor,

as it provides valuable insights into the VRC's operations, which are not typically captured by the Institutional Research and Planning department's statistics.

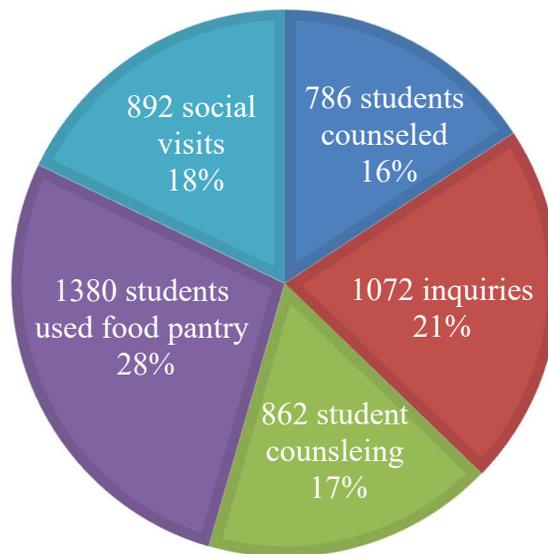
The following chart showcases a vital subset of this data, offering a glimpse into the VRC's program capacity, the existing need for its services, and its success in meeting those needs. The sheer quantity of veteran contacts facilitated by the VRC on a daily basis serves as a tangible testament to the high-quality work and indispensable function of the center.

By maintaining detailed records of veteran interactions and their origins, the VRC not only demonstrates its commitment to serving the veteran population but also equips itself with invaluable data-driven insights. These insights can inform strategic decisions, resource allocation, and the continuous improvement of services tailored to the unique needs of veterans on campus.

The VRC's data tracking efforts underscore the importance of capturing and analyzing metrics that may not be readily available through traditional institutional reporting channels. By embracing a data-driven approach, the VRC can effectively advocate for the resources and support necessary to sustain and enhance its vital role in fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for veterans pursuing their educational goals.

VRC 2023 CONTACTS

■ Counseling ■ Inquiries ■ Computer Lab ■ Food Pantry ■ Socializing ■ Counseling



Data taken from VRC in-house tracking emails, phone calls, and visits.

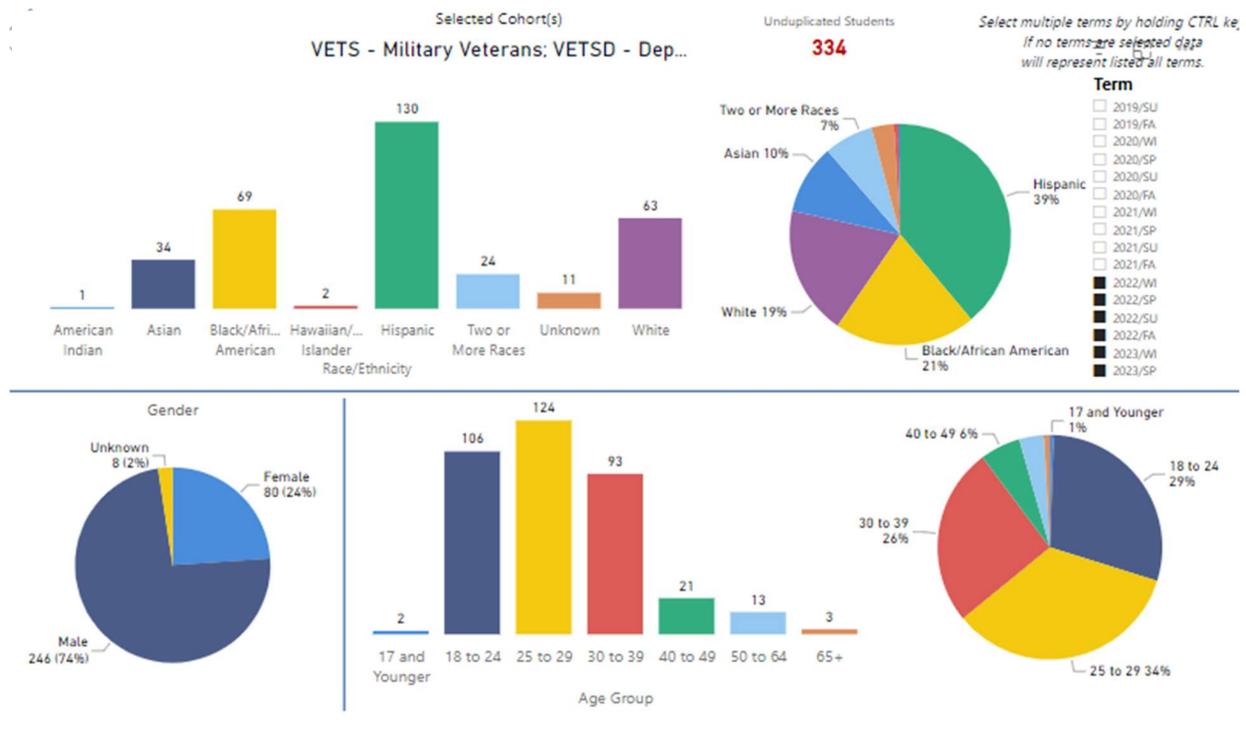
<p>The VRC directly serves veteran students daily, however, the VRC serves other students, staff, faculty, and community members through military and social events that bring awareness, collaboration, and partnerships to the Veterans Service Program. The above data is aggregated from the VRC daily tracking data of the number of students that visit the VRC each day and number of faculty, staff, and community that attend VRC events</p>	<p>Students served:</p>	<p>334 veteran students, @ 600 total students served</p>
	<p>Faculty / staff interaction:</p>	<p>200 faculty and staff served</p>
	<p>Community:</p>	<p>135 who visit the VRC and attend VRC programs. The community includes VSO's, neighbors, and other community supporters.</p>

7. Define the students, faculty, and/or staff the program serves. Include demographics:

The military and veteran community is incredibly diverse, reflecting the rich tapestry of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences that make up the United States. This diversity is a source of strength and resilience, fostering a sense of unity and camaraderie among those who have served, regardless of their individual differences.

Within the military ranks, service members come from all walks of life, representing various ethnicities, religions, socioeconomic backgrounds, and geographic regions. This diversity is a vital asset, as it brings together a wealth of perspectives, skills, and knowledge that enhances the effectiveness and capabilities of the armed forces.

There is a considerable number of staff members who are veterans themselves or have ties to veterans within their families. The diversity within the veteran community reflects the diversity on the campus and within the greater Los Angeles County community. The VRC offers a source of support and empathy for both veteran students and staff members who share a connection to military service. The (VRC) has established a nurturing network aimed at promoting personal development and academic achievement.



This chart above provides demographic information about enrolled military veterans and dependents. The largest racial/ethnic group represented is Hispanic (37%), Black/African American (21%), White (19%), followed by and Asian (10%). There are also smaller percentages for other races/ethnicities. Gender- the majority are Male (74%), with Female accounting for 14% and a small Unknown percentage (1%).

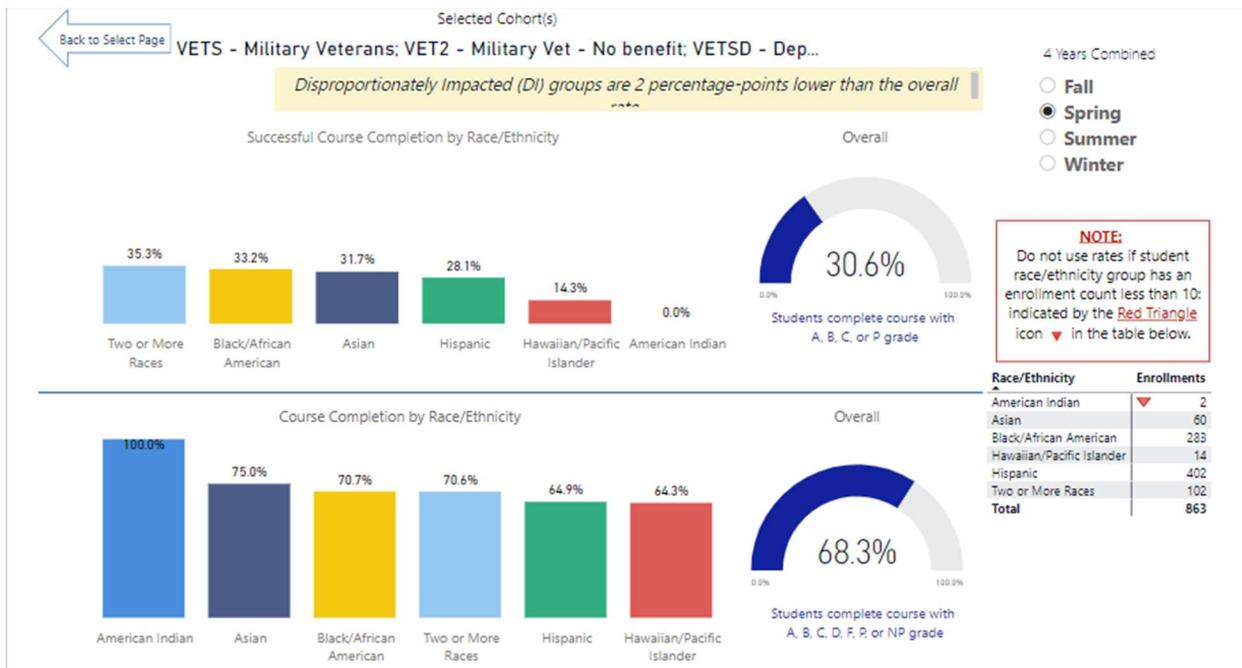
The age distribution shows a significant portion in the 25 to 29 (34%) and 18 to 24 (27%) age groups, indicating a relatively young population. However, there are also representations across other age groups, including older veterans. The demographic breakdown of enrolled military veterans and dependents at El Camino College offers valuable insights into the diverse composition of this particular student cohort and its alignment with the broader student population.

While the majority of enrolled military veterans are male, the presence of female veterans and dependents is notable. This gender diversity underscores the importance of gender-sensitive programming and support services tailored to the unique experiences and challenges faced by

female veterans, such as access to healthcare, childcare, and reintegration into civilian life. There is a significant concentration of younger veterans, the presence of veterans across various age groups, including older adults, highlights the diverse life experiences and career trajectories within the veteran community. This diversity underscores the importance of age-inclusive programming and services that address the unique needs and challenges of veterans at different stages of their lives.

The demographic composition of military veterans and dependents mirrors that of the broader student population at El Camino College, indicating that veterans are an integral and representative segment of the campus community. This alignment underscores the importance of inclusive policies and initiatives that prioritize the academic success and well-being of all students, including military-affiliated individuals.

8. Using the [Student Services Dashboard](#) or other data sources, describe how you address equity gaps within your program. Consider indicating if the program outcomes show increases, more success, or other favorable outcomes compared to the overall student population, or, if the program's equity gaps compare the population served to our community and underserved populations.



The above charts display information about course completion rates by race/ethnicity (Spring 2022- this chart does not include white students.)

The top chart shows the percentage of students who successfully completed a course with an A, B, C, or D grade for different racial/ethnic groups. The overall course completion rate is 30.6%. The groups with the highest completion rates are Two or More Races (35.3%) and Asian (33.2%), while the groups with the lowest rates are Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (14.3%) and Hispanic (28.1%).

The bottom chart displays the overall course completion rate with grades A, B, C, D, F, or NP (No Pass). The overall rate is 68.3%. Again, American Indian (100.9%) and Asian (70.7%) students have the highest completion rates, while Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (64.3%) and Hispanic (64.9%) students have the lowest rates.

The disproportionately impacted (DI) groups Hispanic, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, as mentioned in the chart, have completion rates 2 percentage points lower than the overall rate.

Addressing equity gaps within a program requires a multifaceted approach that goes beyond mere data analysis. It involves a deep understanding of systemic inequalities and a commitment to dismantling barriers to success for marginalized and underserved student populations. Program staff and faculty should have participated in cultural competence training to develop an understanding of the historical context of inequality and its impact on student success. This training helps staff recognize their own biases and privilege, fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

Equity-minded programs provide holistic support that addresses not only academic needs but also socio-economic, emotional, and cultural factors affecting student success. This involves offering wraparound services such as counseling, tutoring, financial aid assistance, childcare, and transportation support. Academic programs are examined for inclusive curriculum and pedagogical practices that reflect diverse perspectives and experiences. Incorporating culturally relevant content, diverse authors, and inclusive teaching methods help create a more engaging

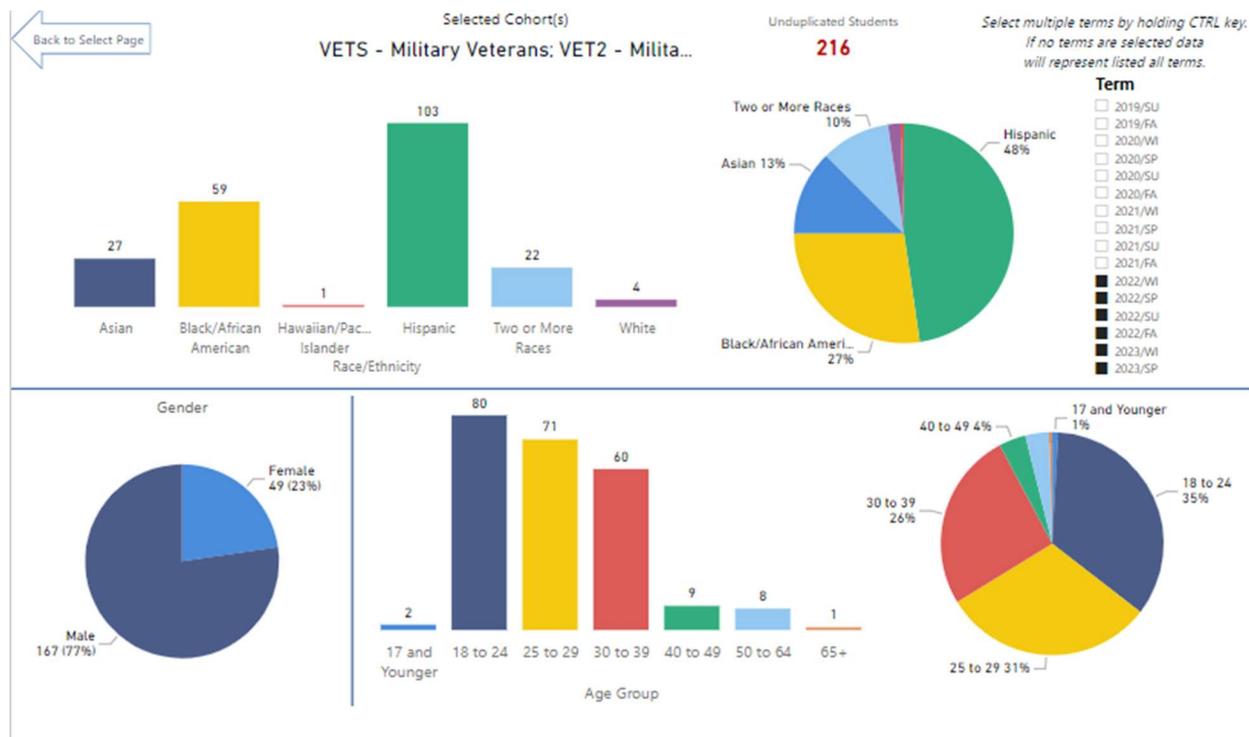
and supportive learning environment for all students.

Veteran students may have experienced trauma due to military service, discrimination, or personal hardships. Not all academic programs include trauma-informed practices that recognize the impact of trauma on veteran student well-being and academic performance. However, the VRC encourages creating safe spaces, providing trauma-informed counseling services, and offering accommodations for veteran students who have experienced trauma.

Transparency in data reporting and accountability measures are critical for tracking progress in addressing equity gaps. Programs should regularly share data on student outcomes disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, and other relevant factors that help to understanding and close equity gaps over time.

The following demographic chart highlights several key characteristics of the military veteran population within the dataset. Understanding the demographic composition of the veteran population is crucial for designing targeted support services, programs, and resources tailored to meet the specific needs and preferences of different racial/ethnic, gender, and age groups within the veteran community. Additionally, the findings underscore the importance of addressing diversity and inclusion within veteran support programs to ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities for all veterans, regardless of their demographic characteristics.

The analysis of demographic data provides valuable insights into the composition of the military veteran population within the dataset, informing strategic efforts to enhance support and services for veterans across various racial/ethnic, gender, and age groups.



This chart presents demographic data related to military veterans and dependents:

Race/Ethnicity:

- The majority of the population is Hispanic (193).
- The next largest groups are Black/African American (59) and Asian (27).
- There is also a significant proportion categorized as "Two or More Races" (22).

Gender:

- The population is predominantly male (141) compared to female (47).

Age Group:

- The largest age group is 30 to 39 years old (40).
- There is a significant number in the 25 to 29 age group (31).
- The smallest groups are the youngest (17 and younger) and oldest (65+) categories.

The data suggests that the military veteran population captured in this dataset is predominantly Hispanic, male, and concentrated in the age range of 25 to 39 years old.

Student Diversity

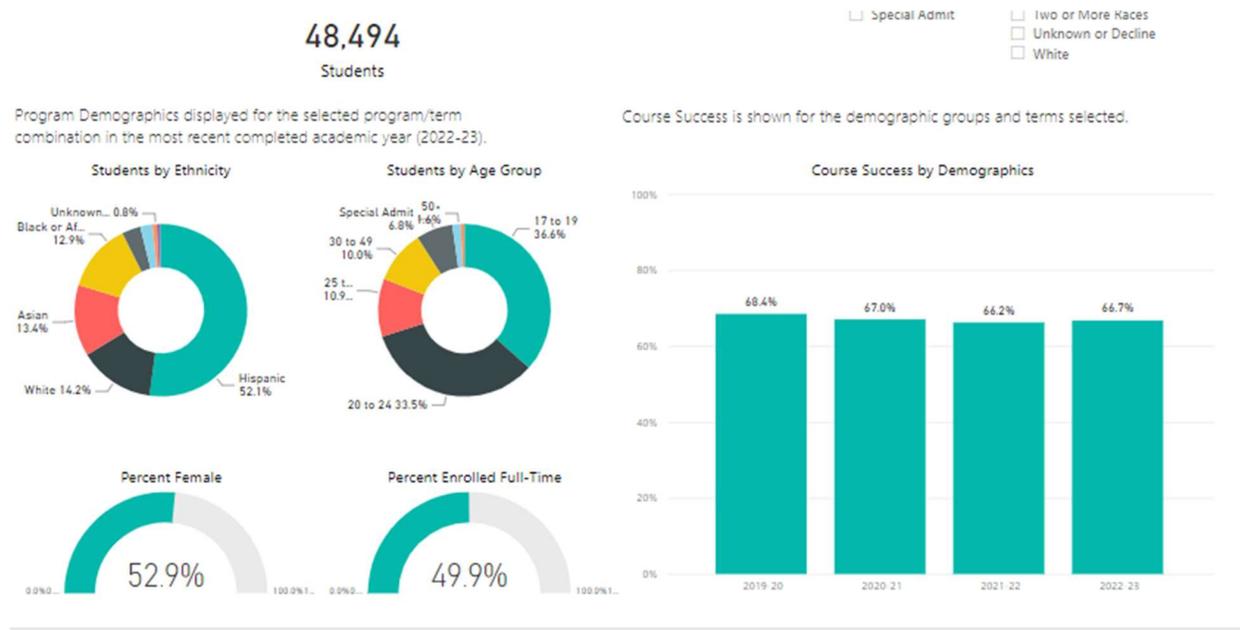
Race/Ethnicity <small>Click on the + button to see data disaggregated by gender</small>	Enrollment	Success Rate	Success Rate Gap	Course Completion Rate	Course Completion Gap
▲					
⊕ American Indian	468	65.8%	-2.4%	83.5%	0.1%
⊕ Asian	30,568	79.4%	13.0%	88.1%	5.5%
⊕ Black or African American	28,019	58.1%	-11.7%	79.0%	-5.1%
⊕ Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1,046	57.1%	-11.2%	77.5%	-5.9%
⊕ Hispanic or Latina/e/o	109,759	64.9%	-6.8%	81.9%	-3.1%
⊕ Two or More Races	9,064	73.7%	5.7%	85.4%	2.1%
⊕ Unknown or Decline	8,193	68.7%	0.5%	85.5%	2.2%
⊕ White	29,118	77.7%	11.0%	87.6%	4.8%

This chart provides data on enrollment success rates, success rate gaps, course completion rates, and course completion gaps for different racial/ethnic groups.

Some key observations:

1. Asian students have the highest enrollment success rate (79.4%) and a positive success rate gap of 13.0%, indicating they perform better than the overall average.
2. Black or African American and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students have the lowest enrollment success rates (58.1% and 57.1% respectively) and significant negative success rate gaps (-11.7% and -11.2% respectively).
3. White students have a relatively high enrollment success rate (77.7%) and a positive success rate gap of 11.0%.
4. Hispanic or Latina/e/o students have a below-average enrollment success rate (64.9%) and a negative success rate gap of -6.6%.
5. The "Two or More Races" group has a high success rate (73.7%) and a positive success rate gap of 5.7%.
6. Course completion rates follow a similar pattern, with Asian and White students having the highest rates (88.1% and 87.6% respectively), and Black or African American and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students having the lowest rates (79.0% and 77.5% respectively).

Overall, the data reveals significant disparities in educational outcomes across different racial/ethnic groups, with Asian and White students generally performing better than other groups.

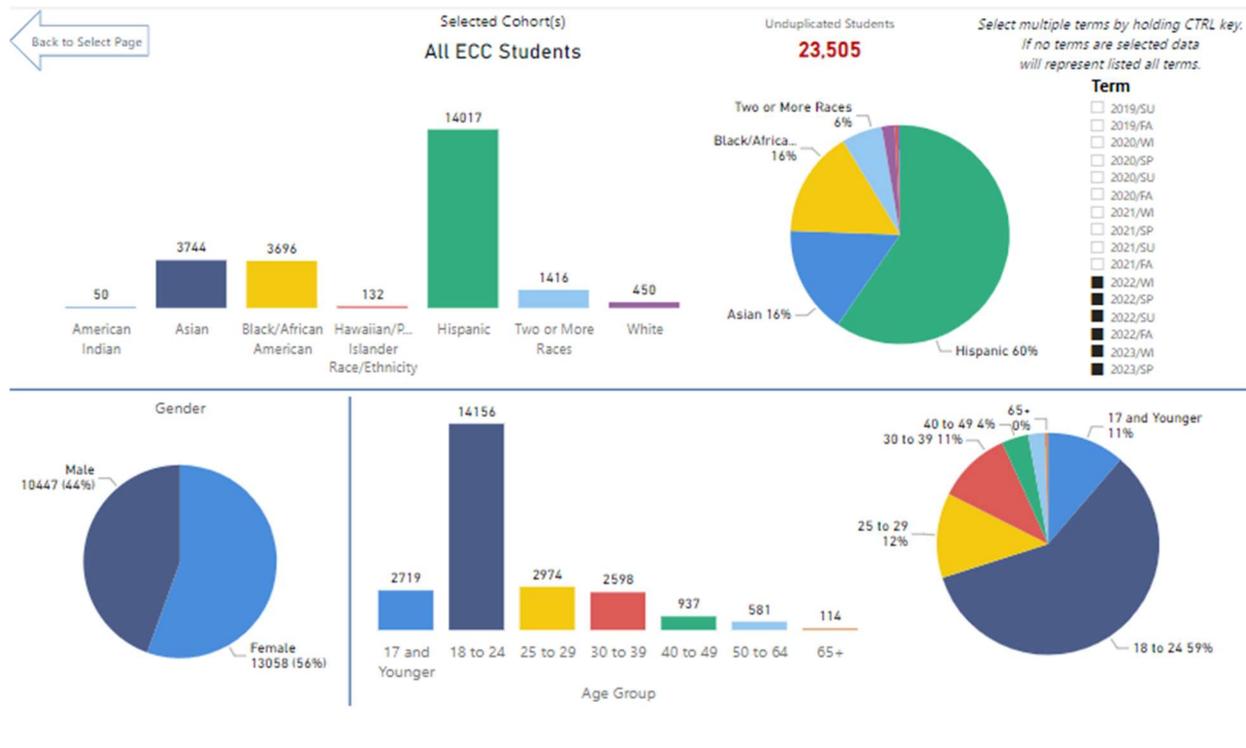


The chart above provides demographic information and course success rates for students in a selected academic program.

The first charts show the distribution of students by ethnicity and age group. The largest ethnic group is Hispanic at 52.1%, followed by White at 14.2%, Asian at 13.4%, and Black or African American at 12.9%. The largest age group is 17 to 19 years old at 36.6%.

The chart also shows the 52.9% of enrolled female students have successful enrollment. And the percentage of students enrolled full-time, is 49.9%. The course success rate appears to be consistent.

The following chart provides an overview of the overall student population's ethnic, age, and gender, and give perspective on the positioning of veteran students within the context of the overall student population.



Ethnicity/Race:

- The largest ethnic group is Hispanic at 60% of students.
- Asian and Black/African students each make up around 14-16% of the population.
- There is a small percentage (4%) of students identifying as two or more races.

Gender:

- The student population is predominantly male at around 56%.
- Females make up the remaining 44%.

Age Groups:

- The largest age group is 18 to 24 years old, comprising around 39% of students.
- There is a significant population (30%) in the 25 to 29 age range as well.
- Smaller percentages are seen in the younger (17 and younger at 11%) and older (40+) age groups.

The data provides an overall picture of the diverse demographics of the student body. The demographics of the veteran student population correlates to the numbers of the demographics of the entire college community.

9. What are the goals of the program? And how does the program meet and measure those goals?

The goals of the VRC veteran services programs include:

1. Supporting the transition of military veterans into the college environment and civilian life by providing resources, advising, and a community.
 2. Assisting veterans in utilizing their military education GI Bill benefits to pay for college.
 3. Fostering a veteran-friendly campus culture that understands and addresses the unique needs of student veterans: needs for community, comradeship, and a shared military experience.
 4. Providing academic support services tailored for veterans, such as tutoring, disability services, career counseling, etc.
 5. Advocating for the interests of student veterans within the college community.
- These goals can be measured by VRC daily tracking veteran student VRC access of the Center and the services available in the Center: counseling, computer lab access, food pantry, cooked meals, and comradeship.
 - Staff tracks and categorizes veteran student counseling via ECC Connect, and Teams tracking.
 - The VRC counts veteran and non-veteran attendees to VRC programs and events.
 - Goal successes are evaluated by the number of students that access the website, the orientation presentation and survey completions.
 - Enrollment number of student veterans using services
 - Retention and graduation rates of student veterans using benefits, and not using benefits
 - Feedback surveys from student veterans on effectiveness of services
 - Data on academic performance, GPA, degree completion of student veteran population

All data is accumulated and stored in the VRC shared folder and on the Teams website

10. How effective are your current methods/procedures? What is working well? What needs improvement?

The VRC supports veterans with academic counseling, VA certifications and benefits support, and providing support that assists veterans with daily life have proven to be very effective.

The VRC serves as a vital hub for supporting veterans throughout their academic journey, offering a range of services designed to address their unique needs and challenges. Among these services, academic counseling, VA certifications and benefits support, and assistance with daily life have emerged as particularly effective in facilitating the success and well-being of veteran students.

The VRC's provision of academic counseling, VA certifications and benefits support, and assistance with daily life has proven to be highly effective in supporting veteran students throughout their academic journey. By offering a comprehensive array of services tailored to the unique needs of veteran students, the VRC plays a critical role in promoting their success, well-being, and overall transition from military service to civilian life.

What is Working Well:

1. The VRC provides academic counseling, career counseling, mental health services, and a place for veteran students to build community.
2. Priority Registration – Veteran students will be alerted to take advantage of priority registration enabling students to register for classes before non-veterans, ensuring they can get into required courses needed to stay on track.
3. Credit for Military Training – Veteran students can get academic credit for military training that is applicable to their degree programs. This helps veteran students accelerate degree completion.
4. Veteran-Specific Orientation - Orientation sessions tailored for veterans cover unique issues they face like utilizing GI Bill benefits, indoctrination into the college community, and other resources for veteran students.
5. Advocacy and Support – The VET Club is a student-run club that allows veterans to connect with one another and feel part of a supportive community on campus. The VET Club plays a vital role in fostering a sense of camaraderie and belonging among veterans within the campus community. By being student-run, it offers a unique platform for veterans to not only connect with each other but also actively engage in shaping the activities and initiatives of the club.

Areas for Improvement:

1. Faculty/Staff Training - More comprehensive training is needed for faculty and staff to understand the distinct challenges veterans face and create an inclusive environment sensitive to their needs.
 2. Mental Health Services - Colleges should expand counseling resources and programs focused on issues like trauma, combat stress, and readjusting to civilian life after military service.
 3. Housing – The college offers no housing options for veteran students, any students who may be experiencing homelessness and food insecurities that often accompany homelessness. Though the center endeavors to provide weekly meals, there are no other resources available for students experiencing homelessness to have consistent food and shelter.
 5. Career Transition Support - Additional career development resources, such as networking events, job fairs, and interview preparation tailored to translating military skills.
 6. Incorporating veteran students who do not use VA benefits into the VRC
- Overall, many good initiatives exist but ongoing evaluation and enhancement of programs and services with increased staffing is crucial to fully supporting the veteran student population.

11. **Describe any online/remote services your program offers.**

Online Orientation	The VRC online orientation program includes an introduction to El Camino Community College, the Veteran Resource Center, VA benefits and essential aspects of being a successful student and academic life.
Mental Health Service	Mental health support is included in the orientation program. Students are referred to the El Camino College Student Health Center and U.S. VETS Outside the Wire free mental health support.
Academic Counseling	Students are able to access computerized academic counseling sessions via Zoom, email and telephone appointments are available to the students as well.
Unite Here Supportive Services	Unite Here is an online platform that El Camino, as a member, can access referrals to whatever needs a veteran

	student may have: financial, housing, legal, and other forms of social support
Workshops	Remote access to resources that include benefit workshops, financial aid workshops, mental health workshops, resume writing, job search strategies, financial literacy, stress management, and transitioning to civilian life.

12. **In hindsight, did you learn that there were data needs (new and/or improved) that could have better assisted you with this report?**

Yes, more demographic information regarding veterans should include:

- Housing and homelessness data: Data on housing status, homelessness rates, and available housing resources aimed at addressing veteran homelessness and housing insecurity.
- Current income levels
- Marital status and # of children: single parent, etc.
- Geographic area of primary schools
- Military status (military occupation, officer or enlisted?); deployed, non-deployed, combat, non-combat, military occupational specialties (MOS)?
- Data on the various federal, state, and local benefits and entitlements available to veterans, such as healthcare, education, employment assistance, housing, and disability compensation
- Employment and education data: Information on veterans' employment status, job histories, educational backgrounds, and career interests can assist in job placement, training, and educational support programs.
- Community resources: Information on local community organizations, services, and resources that support veterans and provide referrals and partnerships for comprehensive care.
- Program utilization data: Tracking data on the services and programs utilized by veterans, including participation rates, satisfaction levels, and outcomes to help evaluate program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement (data collected in-house by VRC staff).

Service Area Outcomes

13. List your current SAOs:

Based on the program's work since the last program review, compare the program's SAOs and respond to the following questions:

The SAO's from the last program review are the following:

1. Students will have a complete understanding of the Veterans Services Program and the student responsibilities to ensure completion of their educational goal.
2. Veterans will attend a Student Veterans Orientation session to ensure an understanding of the Veterans Education Benefits, El Camino College Policies, Resources and Academic Support Programs.
3. All veterans Students will have a Comprehensive Educational Plan by meeting with the Veterans Academic Counselor within the first semester of attending El Camino College.

El Camino College has a Veterans Services Center that provides various support services and resources to help student veterans achieve their educational and career goals. Here are some key outcomes and services offered through the Veterans Services Center at El Camino College:

1. Academic Counseling and Guidance: The center offers academic counseling specifically tailored to the needs of student veterans, helping them plan their educational paths, select courses, and ensure they meet requirements for their desired programs and degrees.
2. Veterans Benefits Assistance: The center assists student veterans in understanding and applying for various federal and state educational benefits, such as the GI Bill, tuition assistance programs, and vocational rehabilitation services.
3. Transitional Support: The center helps student veterans transition from military service to civilian and academic life, providing resources and support services to address potential challenges, such as adjusting to campus life, managing disabilities, or coping with stress.
4. Tutoring and Academic Support: The center connects students to tutoring services, study groups, and other academic support resources to help student veterans succeed in their coursework and maintain good academic standing.
5. Career Counseling and Placement: The center refers students to career counseling services, including assistance with resume writing, job search strategies, and connecting with

potential employers who value the skills and experience of military veterans.

6. Peer Support and Community Building: The center often serves as a gathering place for student veterans, fostering a sense of community and providing opportunities for peer support, networking, and social activities.

7. Advocacy and Awareness: The center engages in advocacy efforts to raise awareness about the unique needs and experiences of student veterans on campus, and work to ensure that policies and services are responsive to their concerns.

These services aim to support the academic success, personal growth, and career development of student veterans at El Camino College, helping them achieve their educational and professional goals while acknowledging and addressing their specific needs as individuals transitioning from military service.

14. What evidence supports that SAOs were partially or fully achieved?

Student Area Outcomes (SAOs) or the evidence supporting their achievement.

a. *Students will have a complete understanding of the Veterans Services Program and the student responsibilities to ensure completion of their educational goal.* – Every student that comes to the VRC is given a tour and an explanation of the services and support in the Center. Providing each student with a tour and explanation of the services within the VRC creates a personalized introduction to the center. This individualized approach acknowledges the unique needs and experiences of each veteran, fostering a sense of respect and importance right from the start. It also allows staff members to establish a rapport with the students, making them feel valued and supported.

b. *Veterans will attend a student veterans orientation session to ensure an understanding of veteran education benefits, El Camino College policies, resources and academic support programs.* All new students are required to attend orientation. The barrier is not always having the staffing to do an orientation ahead of the semester. The goal is to do the orientation the first week of school, however, we are not assured we are able to get all students to attend on the specific day we can do the in-person orientation. We began sending the orientation to students, however, we get little feedback that way. We have now posted the orientation on the website, so students can attend orientation ahead of the beginning of the semester and at their leisure. The orientation provides a comprehensive detailing of veteran benefits and services in the VRC. The

orientation links veteran students to the various resources and support services available within the VRC. This includes but is not limited to counseling services, academic support, career assistance, VA benefits guidance, and community resources. By familiarizing students with these offerings, the VRC empowers veterans to proactively seek out the assistance they may need throughout their academic journey and beyond. We are able to measure orientation success with a survey that students complete at the end of the presentation.

c. All veterans Students will have a Comprehensive Educational Plan by meeting with the Veterans Academic Counselor within the first semester of attending El Camino College. The policy mandates that all veteran students must develop a Veteran Education Plan (VEP) and a Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP). The VEP is required by the VA. The CEP is a detailed roadmap that outlines a student's academic and career goals, along with the courses and milestones necessary to achieve them. This plan serves as a guiding document throughout a student's academic journey, ensuring they stay on track and make progress towards their objectives.

The VA requires all veteran students to meet with a veteran specialized academic counselor designated for veterans within their first semester at El Camino College. The dedicated veterans' counselor possesses expertise in understanding the unique challenges and opportunities that veteran students may encounter during their academic pursuits. Through these meetings, veterans can receive personalized guidance and support tailored to their specific needs and circumstances. The policy emphasizes the integration of veterans' educational plans into the broader student services infrastructure. By ensuring that the VEPs and CEPs are posted in the Veteran Services Teams folder, staff and counseling teams can easily access and track students' progress and meets VA compliance measures. This integration facilitates coordination among various support services, enabling a more holistic approach to supporting veteran students throughout their academic journey.

Tracking students' comprehensive education plans underscores a commitment to accountability and monitoring. Regularly monitoring progress allows for early identification of any challenges or deviations from the academic plan, enabling timely interventions and support mechanisms to be put in place. This proactive approach enhances the likelihood of veteran students' success and retention.

15. If SAOs were not achieved, what modifications might you make to your SAOs. SAO'S were achieved.

goal

Program Recommendations, Vision, and Future Planning

16. List program goals or recommendations to be completed by the next program review (currently 4 years).

VRC goals for the next 4 years are these:

1. VRC Director position to be institutionalized.
2. Comprehensive list of resources that not only support veteran student academic success, but housing and other living support as needed.
3. Develop a pipeline to potential employers for veteran students.
4. Veteran students to take a survey that addresses housing and supportive service needs.
5. Educate faculty on the veteran student profile and the veteran community.

17. What key initiatives or projects will the program need to complete to achieve the program goals?

1. Hiring an additional dedicated full-time counselor is crucial to provide personalized academic planning and support. Each student veteran would receive a Veteran Education Plan mapping out their academic path as well as a Comprehensive Education Plan considering their full circumstances. Justification for funding this position is that the counselor's time with each student has doubled to develop these customized plans.
2. Strengthening coordination with other support programs like EOPS, CARE, and CalWORKs will allow veteran students to access a wider array of wraparound services they may be eligible for. Breaking down silos between these programs is key.
3. Developing a comprehensive inventory of housing assistance resources and getting involved in local homelessness initiatives is needed to address the housing insecurity many student veterans face. Implementing rent/mortgage assistance, temporary housing solutions, and financial literacy education are potential initiatives.
4. Offering professional development to faculty/staff will increase understanding of the unique

challenges and strengths student veterans bring to campus. This will help employees better support this population and strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives.

5. Building stronger partnerships with local veteran organizations, employers, and community resources has mutual benefits. It increases awareness of available support services while connecting students to potential career opportunities and employers committed to hiring veterans.

6. Expanding career transition assistance like job training programs, resume workshops, job fairs, and employer partnerships will aid student veterans entering the civilian workforce after military service.

7. Enhancing data collection systems and analysis capacity is critical for program assessment and improvement. Tracking metrics on student veteran needs, utilization of services, academic progress, and outcomes will inform data-driven decisions to better allocate resources.

Resources

18. **Using the program goals or recommendations above, address the resources needed to meet these program goals. (*List the resources in order of priority and explain how these resources contribute to meeting the program’s goals*).**

<p>Funding to increase staff:</p>	<p>Additional dedicated staff would enable the program to employ more dedicated veteran counselors who possess specialized knowledge and experience in addressing the unique challenges faced by veteran students. Dedicated veteran counselors would include academic counselors, career counselors, housing navigators, and case managers to help with life skills.</p>
<p>Develop an inventory of housing resources and supportive services:</p>	<p>Establishing a comprehensive inventory of housing resources and supportive services available to veteran students can streamline the process of accessing essential resources. This inventory should include information on affordable housing options, mental health services, childcare assistance, and transportation resources, among others. By centralizing this</p>

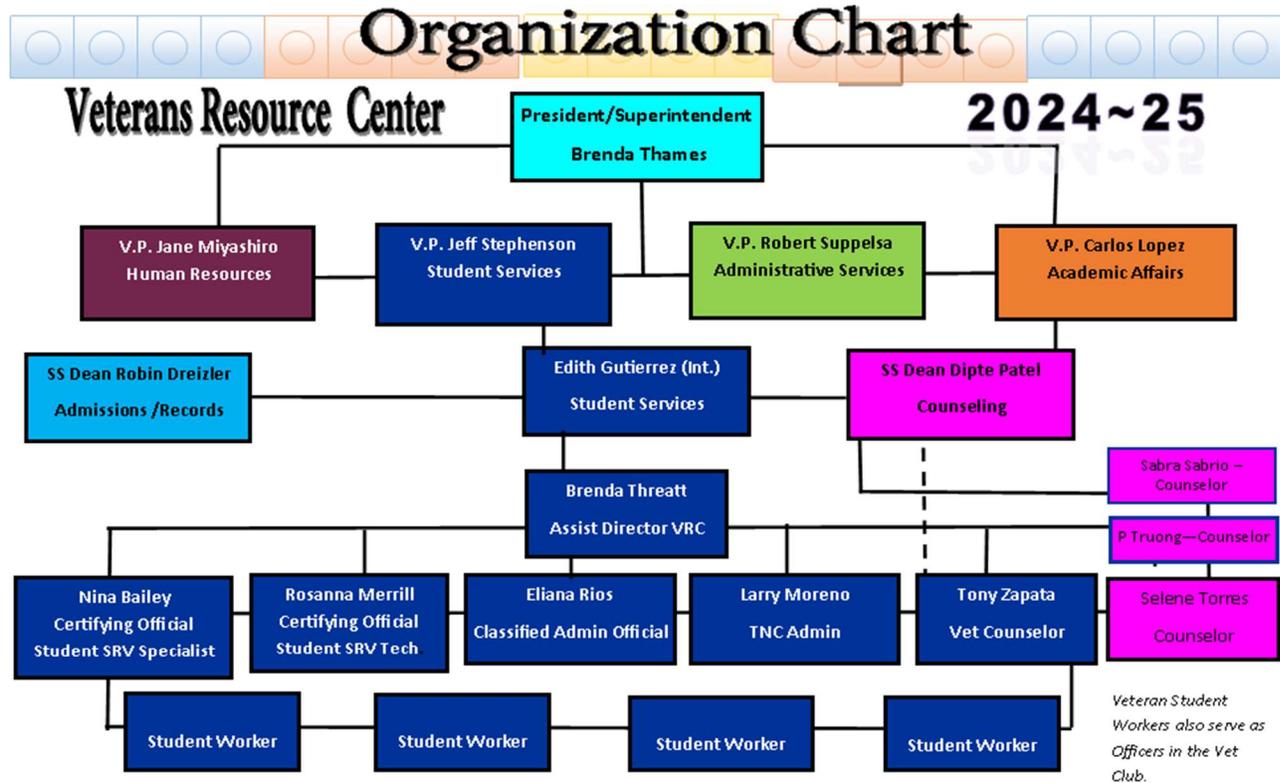
	information, veteran students can easily navigate available support networks to meet their needs.
Increase employment and career pipelines to industry partners:	Strengthening relationships with employers and industry partners is crucial for creating meaningful employment and career opportunities for veteran students. Allocating resources to develop internship, apprenticeship, and job placement programs aligned with academic programs can provide hands-on experience and increase job readiness. Additionally, establishing mentorship programs and networking events can further support veterans' transition into the workforce.
Strengthen partnerships with veteran service organizations:	Investing in partnerships with veteran service organizations can expand the range of support services available to veteran students. This may involve collaborating with organizations specializing in mental health support, disability advocacy, financial assistance, or peer mentorship programs. By leveraging these partnerships, colleges can offer holistic support tailored to the diverse needs of veteran students.
Better coordination with other supportive service programs:	Improve coordination and communication between various supportive service programs on campus. Implementing a centralized referral system and regular interdepartmental meetings can facilitate collaboration among counseling services, disability support offices, tutoring centers, and other resources. This integrated approach ensures veteran students receive comprehensive support addressing their academic, personal, and career needs.
Increase professional development for staff to enhance their understanding of veteran students and veteran services:	Providing ongoing training and workshops for faculty and staff is essential for enhancing their understanding of veteran students' experiences and needs. Professional development opportunities can focus on topics such as military culture, trauma-informed care, mental health awareness, and effective

	communication strategies. By investing in staff training, colleges can cultivate a more inclusive and supportive campus environment for veteran students.
Improve technology, data collection and analysis	Investing in technology infrastructure, data systems, and analytics tools is critical for effectively tracking and analyzing student performance and engagement. By collecting and analyzing data on veteran student demographics, academic progress, and support service utilization, colleges can identify trends, disparities, and areas for improvement. This data-driven approach informs evidence-based decision-making and enables targeted interventions to enhance support services for veteran students.
Contacts, Memberships and Conferences	Allocating resources for memberships in relevant professional organizations, attendance at conferences, and participation in networking events can facilitate collaboration and knowledge-sharing among staff. These opportunities allow staff to stay updated on best practices, innovative strategies, and emerging trends in supporting veteran students. Additionally, networking with professionals in the field can foster partnerships and collaborations that benefit veteran student services programs
Dedicated Administrative staff	Administrative tasks such as requisitions, managing time sheets, and handling general administrative duties can consume a significant portion of the director's time and attention. By assigning dedicated administrative staff to handle these responsibilities, the director can allocate more time and focus to their core responsibilities, such as program development, strategic planning, and community engagement.

19. **Consider the following types of resources:** *staffing, technology, furniture, contracts, memberships, travel and conferences.* (See the chart above)

Please attach the following:

- Current organizational chart
- Current funding for program operations (do not to include full time salaries) by budget type: General Fund, Categorical Funding



Mission Statement

El Camino College makes a positive difference in people's lives. We provide excellent comprehensive educational programs and services that promote student learning and success in collaboration with our diverse communities.

The Veteran Resource Center (VRC) provides veteran men, women and dependents with academic assistance, benefits navigation and supportive services to equip students for higher education and desired career goals.

General Fund - 11

Financial Summary

As Of: This Fiscal Year End ... x Summarize By: Fund, Object Type, Object ... x Fund: 11 x Department: 6105,6106,6107,6108 x

Object	Title	YTD Adjusted Budget	Year-To-Date Actual	Year-To-Date Encumbrance	Year-To-Date Variance
Fund 11 -- Unrestricted - El Camino					
Expenditures					
52140	CLASS-Technical Related	169,224.00	112,704.00	0.00	56,520.00
53220	PERS-Non-Instr-CLASS/PT	45,090.00	30,069.48	0.00	15,020.52
53320	OASDI-Non-Instr-CLASS	10,538.00	6,484.84	0.00	4,053.16
53360	MEDICARE-Non Instr-CLASS/PT/SW	2,465.00	1,516.62	0.00	948.38
53420	H&W-Non-Instr-CLASS	38,541.00	23,901.28	0.00	14,639.72
53520	SUI-Non-Instr-CLASS/PT/SW	85.00	52.08	0.00	32.92
53620	WC-Non-Instr-CLASS/PT/SW	3,923.00	2,615.88	0.00	1,307.12
53720	Cash in Lieu of Insurance	840.00	420.00	0.00	420.00
53920	OPEB-Non-Instr-CLASS/PT/SW	1,352.00	901.58	0.00	450.42
54550	Supplies Non-Instruct	5,000.00	1,762.91	0.00	3,237.09
55220	Conferences Mgmt	3,500.00	(2,989.05)	0.00	6,489.05
55300	Dues And Memberships	350.00	0.00	350.00	0.00
56421	Equipment > \$5K - NI - Tech	8,650.00	0.00	0.00	8,650.00
Total Expenditures		289,558.00	177,439.62	350.00	111,768.38
Total Fund 11		289,558.00	177,439.62	350.00	111,768.38

Categorical Funding - 12

Financial Summary

As Of: This Fiscal Year End ... x Summarize By: Department, Object Type, Object ... x Fund: 12 x Department: 6105,6106,6107,6108 x

Object	Title	YTD Adjusted Budget	Year-To-Date Actual	Year-To-Date Encumbrance	Year-To-Date Variance
Expenditures					
52340	TNC-Non-instr Temp/Part Time	48,846.00	0.00	0.00	48,846.00
54398	Unalloc CY Resources	24,711.00	0.00	0.00	24,711.00
54399	Unallocated PY Carryover	254,031.00	0.00	0.00	254,031.00
54550	Supplies Non-Instruct	20,000.00	1,063.86	0.00	18,936.14
55220	Conferences Mgmt	20,000.00	7,675.49	0.00	12,324.51
55228	Conferences Other	25,000.00	8,119.35	0.00	16,880.65
55300	Dues And Memberships	10,000.00	284.19	1,215.81	8,500.00
55641	Leases-Copiers	1,000.00	93.04	0.00	906.96
55890	Other Services And Expenses	100,000.00	8,638.85	0.00	91,361.15
55980	Reproduction - Noninstructional	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
56421	Equipment > \$5K - NI - Tech	0.00	0.00	10.00	(10.00)
56422	Equipment < \$5K-NI-Tech-NC	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
57639	Student Incentive Account	50,000.00	2,329.69	0.00	47,670.31
Total Expenditures		563,588.00	28,204.47	1,225.81	534,157.72
Total Department 6105		0.00	(480,101.71)	1,225.81	478,875.90