

Bakersfield College

Program Review – Annual Update

Program Name: Veteran Services

Program Type: Instructional Student Affairs Administrative Service Other

Bakersfield College Mission: Bakersfield College provides opportunities for students from diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds to attain Associate and Baccalaureate degrees and certificates, workplace skills, and preparation for transfer. Our rigorous and supportive learning environment fosters students' abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and demonstrate competencies and skills in order to engage productively in their communities and the world.

Describe how the program supports the Bakersfield College Mission:

Veteran Services supports the Bakersfield College Mission by engaging student veterans and dependents from a holistic student success model. This distinct student population is actively supported in achieving success metrics via the development of a comprehensive student education plans that are created with their career and educational goals in mind. Keeping their military experiences and expertise in mind, Veteran Services meets student-veterans where they are: mind, body, and spirit. Therefore, Veteran Services provides a pathway to success through vigorous academic advising sessions provided by a dedicated Veterans Educational Advisor, workshops, a veteran lounge, and maintaining vital relations with the Kern County veteran service community. While student-veterans have already engaged productively in their communities and the world, Veteran Services creates and encourages connectivity between them and the academic environment of Bakersfield College, fostering critical thinking, effective communication, and a demonstration of competency, in order to support student veterans in successfully completing their chosen educational goals.

Program Mission Statement:

The mission of Veteran Services is to assist service members, veterans transitioning from the armed forces to college, and their dependents, by providing them with programs and services in support of their academic and personal success. With the assistance of Veteran Services, student veterans and dependents will collaborate with faculty and staff through active engagement, clear communication, and academic support services. Through intrusive advising, rigorous academics, timely responses to inquiries, efficient VA education benefits support, and an appreciation and awareness of the veteran experience, Veteran Services will guide student veterans and dependents in the pursuit of their educational objectives.

Instructional Programs only:

- A. List the degrees and Certificates of Achievement the program offers
- B. If your program offers both an A.A. and an A.S. degree in the same subject, please explain the rationale for offering both and the difference between the two.
- C. If your program offers a local degree in addition to the ADT degree, please explain the rationale for offering both.

Progress on Program Goals:

- A. List the program’s current goals. For each goal (minimum of 2 goals), discuss progress and changes. If the program is addressing more than two (2) goals, please duplicate this section. Please provide an action plan for each goal that gives the steps to completing the goal and the timeline.

Program Goal	Which institutional goals from the Bakersfield College Strategic Plan will be advanced upon completion of this goal? (select all that apply)	Progress on goal achievement (choose one)	Status Update – Action Plan
1. Continue to establish and systematize Veteran Services in order to meet the unique needs of veterans and dependents.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1: Student Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Student Progression and Completion <input type="checkbox"/> 3: Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> 4: Oversight and Accountability <input type="checkbox"/> 5: Leadership and Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed: _____ (Date) <input type="checkbox"/> Revised: _____ (Date) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ongoing: _____ (Date)	Veteran Services continues to exist as a proper program, with: 1. Guidelines, regulations 2. Proper staffing, budgeting & facilities 3. Transition/DSPS support 4. Equity & Inclusion coordination 5. External support 6. Improved Services
2. Create a physical Veterans Resource Center (VRC) to support the academic, personal, and professional development and success of our student veterans.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1: Student Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Student Progression and Completion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3: Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> 4: Oversight and Accountability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5: Leadership and Engagement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Completed: <u>4/17</u> (Date) <input type="checkbox"/> Revised: _____ (Date) <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing: _____ (Date)	Computers and work stations have been installed. 4/17 Study/Meeting room has been created. Assistive Technology (Software) has been installed. Certifying Official has been tasked to certify student veterans only during the past year.

3. Hire a Veterans Resource Center Coordinator, Counselor, and a full-time dedicated Veterans-School Certifying Official.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1: Student Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Student Progression and Completion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3: Facilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4: Oversight and Accountability <input type="checkbox"/> 5: Leadership and Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed: _____ (Date) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised: Fall 2017 (Date) <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing: _____ (Date)	Not completed goal revised moving forward.
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B. List new or revised goals (if applicable)

New/Replacement Program Goal	Which institutional goals will be advanced upon completion of this goal? (select all that apply)	Status Update – Action Plan
1. To increase student veterans enrollment and meet the goals of the college for graduation and success.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1: Student Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Student Progression and Completion <input type="checkbox"/> 3: Facilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4: Oversight and Accountability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5: Leadership and Engagement	To increase a presence in the community improving Bakersfield College’s value with the stakeholders by providing the services needed to produce successful veteran graduates.
2. Utilize the interim Veterans Resource Center (VRC) to support the academic, personal, and professional development and success of our student veterans while the new facility is constructed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1: Student Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Student Progression and Completion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3: Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> 4: Oversight and Accountability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5: Leadership and Engagement	In order for Veteran Services to be successful, such services should be provided in one area, with all the needed resources readily available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseling/Certifying staff and offices • Completion teams to provide academic support. • Outside agencies to provide services within the VRC. • Budgets and facilities to be monitored, managed, and maintained. • Personal and professional development can be fostered by comprehensive therapeutic and peer support program and events provided within the VRC.

<p>3. Hire a Veteran Services Program Manager and Counselor.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1: Student Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Student Progression and Completion <input type="checkbox"/> 3: Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> 4: Oversight and Accountability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5: Leadership and Engagement</p>	<p>With a stand-alone facility, the Veterans Services would need a Program Manager to manage the functions of the VRC and its student workers learning critical skills for professional development. Veteran Services information could be disseminated and provided by the manager. A Program Manager could identify the needs of the student veteran and formulate solutions with other services and resources available or created to support student success.</p> <p>To transition the services provided into a fully-budgeted program with the appropriate physical, fiscal, and staffing resources to improve student veteran retention and success.</p> <p>A counselor could better serve this population by providing comprehensive academic and individual counseling services to the non-traditional student in comparison to an advisor based on assigned duties.</p> <p>Budgets have been increased, and a full-time dedicated Veterans-School Certifying Official was hired.</p>
<p>4. Use student veterans' data to improve services and success of students served by Veterans Services.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1: Student Learning <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Student Progression and Completion <input type="checkbox"/> 3: Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> 4: Oversight and Accountability <input type="checkbox"/> 5: Leadership and Engagement</p>	<p>Student success will increase with the appropriate guidance, support, and direction provided by members of the affinity group's completion team members with accurate contact information and monitoring practices. Identified a financial aid liaison and dedicated a certifying official for processing incoming veterans, updated website, and attended training from external sources during the past year meeting an intermediate goal.</p>

Best Practices:

Programs often do something particularly well; usually they have learned through assessment – sometimes trial and error – what solves a problem or makes their programs work so well. These are often called Best Practices and can help others. Please share the practices your program has found to be effective.

In the program's third year many improvements have been.

- Veterans were identified prior to or earlier in the matriculation process and provided specialized advising and counseling services from the dedicated Veterans Educational Advisor using internal and external reports.
- Student veterans' needs were identified and advocated for by members of the affinity group's completion team.
- Student veterans' financial aid needs were explained early in the process to increase the resources available to the student and resolve any issues with the assistance of the student veterans' liaison in financial aid.
- Student veterans were better informed about the resources and services available to them on campus and in the community via the VA work studies staffing the VRC.
- The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) was staffed by ten (10) student veterans funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs Student Work-Study Program who assisted other student veterans, visitors, potential students, and the Veteran Educational Advisor.
- The Veterans-School Certifying Official, who is full-time dedicated to veterans, has improved the services the students veterans received via effective communication with the Veterans Educational Advisor to prevent and remedy VA certifying issues.
- Student veterans have participated in community events as a cohort resulting in improved student life.
- The coordination between the VRC staff, other department and outside agencies has improve the student veteran experience and success.

Program Analysis:

Take a look at your trend data (all programs should have some form of data that is used to look at changes over time).

1. Please report on any unexpected changes or challenges that your program encountered this cycle:
 - Student veterans are being identified and monitored with more accuracy to improve communication from the VRC.
 - Conferences and trainings attended by Veterans Services has increased effectiveness, efficiency, knowledge, and compliance
 - Veteran Services and Equity has identified ways for student veterans to gain access to BC
 - The space allotted for veterans has increase resulting in veterans utilizing the space to coordinate study groups and utilize computer working stations.
 - The services provided by the Veterans – Certifying Official has increased through effective communication with the Veterans Educational Advisor and training.
 - Improved communication with incoming veterans/dependents resulting in improved customer service and satisfaction
 - Veterans Services outreach has continued to share information and improve relations in the veteran community

2. How does your trend data impact your decision making process for your program?

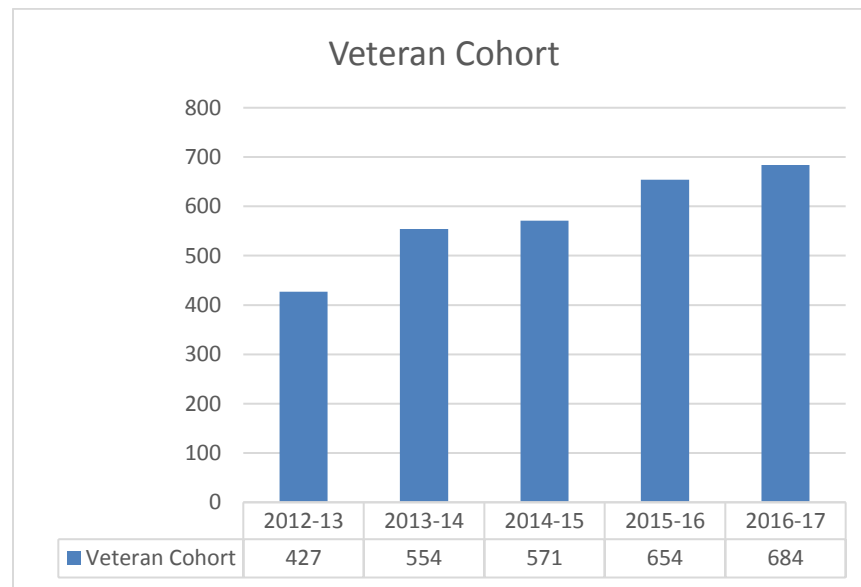
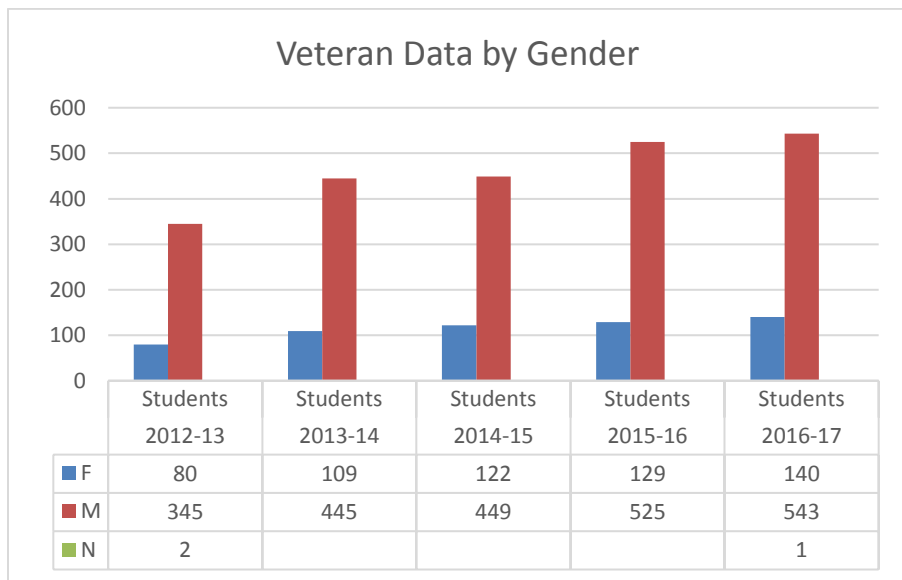
Recent data shows that Veteran students have made significant strides towards student success metrics evidenced by successful course completion, persistence, and completion rates. Data for the 2014-15 AY show that veteran students successfully completed 12 college units at 8.6% higher rate than the institutional average. Veteran students also experienced a growth in persistence rate from the 2013-14 AY to the 2014-15 AY by 20.7% and by 9.9% when compared to the institutional average. The analysis of successful completion of gateway courses within the first year of enrollment revealed that veteran students complete the college-level English course at a 1.9% lower rate than the institutional average, but complete college-level math at a 9.4% higher rate than the intuitional average. The success rate of math completion is also a 14.1% increase from the previous AY

(2013-14). In addition, Bakersfield College has also experienced growth in the number of veteran students, in 2015-16 AY, the institution served 794 veteran students. That is a 15% increase from the previous year.

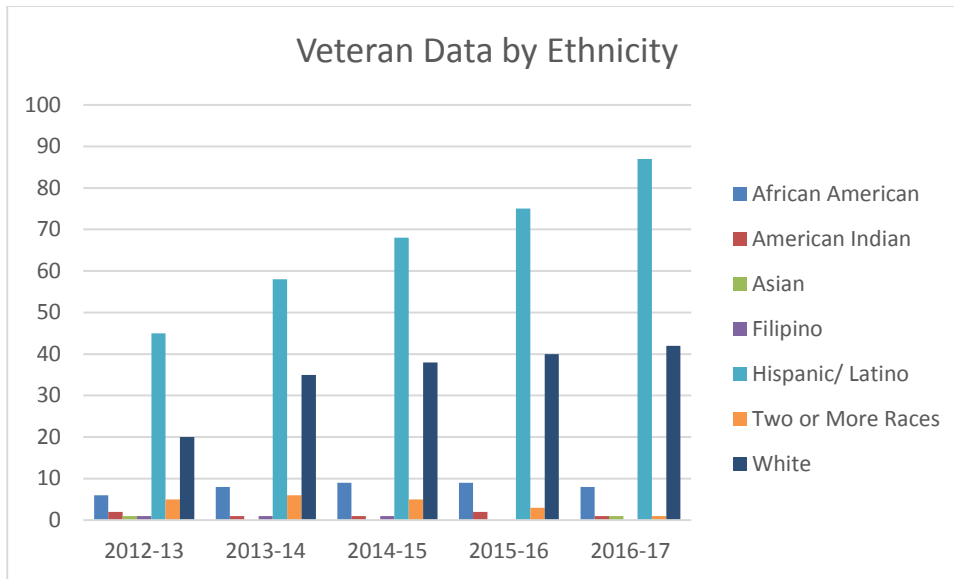
The identified data trends informed our goal development for the next academic year, identified in section 1. The establishment of the VRC allows veteran students to have access to enrollment, financial, personal, and academic resources in one centralized space. Additionally, this space creates streamlined access to peers and resources, helping students to develop a sense of belonging with the institution and, in turn, increased retention rates.¹

3. Were there any changes to student success and retention for face-to-face, as well as online/distance courses?
 - N/A
4. Were there any changes to student demographics (age, gender, or ethnicity) for the past cycle?

The tables below provide demographic data of veteran students by headcount, gender, and ethnicity. The table that disaggregates the data shows that historically male students enroll at a higher rate than their female counterparts. Furthermore, the Veteran Cohort table illustrates the growth rate over the last five years; there has been a 37% growth rate from the 2012-13 to the 2016-17 AY. Lastly, the Ethnicity table shows that Hispanic students are the overwhelming majority. This information should be used as baseline data for the next cycle with the established goals as a guiding reference.



¹ Vincent Tinto’s Student Attrition Theory (1975).



Resource Request and Analysis:

Resource Request		If Fulfilled, Discuss How Previous Year's Requests Impact Program Effectiveness?
<p>Positions: <i>Discuss the impact new and/or replacement faculty and/or staff had on your program's effectiveness.</i></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1: Classified Staff <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Faculty	<p>Classified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Veteran's Resource Center Coordinator would increase the program and student veteran success by coordinating the future center, veteran student work studies, veteran events, update website, conduct outreach, budgets, and report student veteran issues in applicable meetings while the educational counselor/advisor and certifying official meet the academic and reporting needs of the student veterans. <p>Faculty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A dedicated Counselor within the Veteran's Resource Center will increase student success and retention by providing intrusive, comprehensive counseling services to keep the student veterans on their respective pathways.
<p>Professional Development: <i>Describe briefly, the effectiveness of the professional development your program has been engaged in (either</i></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1: Provided Professional Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2: Attended Professional Development	<p>Attended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The professional development allowed the Veterans Educational Advisor to learn about best practices and certifying guidelines to better advise student veterans. Best practices implemented in the VRC have reduced preventable issues relating to student veterans. Conferences, training, and seminars have provided new information about new benefits and changes to old benefits contributing to

<p><i>providing or attending) during the last cycle</i></p>		<p>student success and satisfaction. Ultimately, reducing the amount of undesired errors.</p> <p>Plan to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flex week training will be provided in the future to benefits the college and its employees who interact with student veterans.
<p>Facilities: <i>If your program received a building remodel or renovation, additional furniture or beyond routine maintenance, please explain how this request or requests impacts your program and helps contribute to student success.</i></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1: Space Allocation <input type="checkbox"/> 2: Renovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3: Furniture <input type="checkbox"/> 4: Other <input type="checkbox"/> 5: Beyond Routine Maintenance</p>	<p>2016-17:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities expansion of the VRC has provided the student veterans a location to create personal and professional relationships that benefit their readjustment and academic success. The Veterans Educational Advisor was provided more privacy when advising student veterans while increasing the physical space available the student veterans to meet and study. Computer stations and extra seating have allowed student to access software installed for DSPTS purposes. <p>Future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The facilities (resulting from Measure J) will provide adequate office space for the VRC staff, a tutoring/study room, an outside studying area, small reception area, and a student veteran lounge that will increase its use and effectiveness by providing all the services in one area. Intrusive counseling can be conducted within the cohort via coordinated efforts from the VRC staff.
<p>Technology: <i>If your program received technology (audio/visual – projectors, TV’s, document cameras) and computers, how does the technology impact your program and help contribute to student success?</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 1: Replacement Technology <input type="checkbox"/> 2: New Technology <input type="checkbox"/> 3: Software <input type="checkbox"/> 4: Other _____</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
<p>Resource Request</p>	<p>Discuss How Effective Request is for Student Success?</p>	

<p>Other Equipment: <i>If your program received equipment that is not considered audio/visual or computer equipment technology, please explain how these resources impact your program and help contribute to student success.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1: Replacement <input type="checkbox"/> 2: New <input type="checkbox"/> 3: Other _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A
<p>Budget: <i>Explain how your budget justifications will contribute to increased student success for your program. (Fiscal requests will be submitted by the faculty chair and/or area administrator.)</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change - requesting same allocation to maintain services

Conclusions & Snapshot:

Present any conclusions and findings about the program. This is an opportunity to provide a brief abstract or synopsis of your program’s current circumstances and needs. Consider this a snapshot of your program, if someone were to only read this portion of your annual program review.

- The program is increasingly improving and attempting to meet the student veterans’ needs with its limited resources and staff. The student veterans are only as successful as the current resources and services are capable of providing. Professional development opportunities are proving to be beneficial to the college, the program, and the student veterans. Full-time enrollment will continue to increase as long as the VRC’s capabilities and effectiveness is known with the community that BC serves. Currently, other colleges and institutions are experiencing issues that create an opportunity for BC to capitalize via active outreach seeking potential student veterans and a comprehensive student veteran program.
- Additional staff and resources will better serve the increasing number of returning veterans resulting in higher retention and success rates increasing BC’s opportunity to being recognized by student veterans’ organizations.