

UC San Diego

STUDENT VETERANS RESOURCE CENTER

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We serve Military-Affiliated Students at UC San Diego:

- Approximately 1600 students
- About 25% veterans and 75% family members
- About 1/4 graduate and 3/4 undergraduate
- Nearly all undergraduates are transfer students
- Many are first-generation college students
- Most veterans are older than their peers with unique life experiences
- Many (not all) student veterans have jobs, homes, and families of their own
- Graduation rates are approximately 5 points lower for student veterans than other transfers; our goal is to close that gap

Intrinsic Veteran Strengths

- More mature and focused
- Resilient
- Internal motivation
- Organized and accountable
- Respectful of rank and authority
- Goal-oriented
- High level of integrity
- Self-sacrificing through military service



Barriers to Learning: External

- Classroom environment
 - Seating choices
 - Distractions
 - Classmates are disruptive; lack of respect
 - Instructor is late
 - Policies or expectations are unclear or inconsistent
- Uncomfortable conversations
 - Instructor's comments about war or veterans
 - Insensitive questions
- Outside distractions (family, relationships, childcare, work, finances, housing, etc.)
- Duty obligations and missed classes



Barriers to Learning: Internal

- Culture & Value differences
- Post-deployment adjustment
- Re-negotiation of identity
- Physical disabilities
 - Hearing loss (#1 injury, over 60%)
 - Significant back & knee problems
- Hidden disabilities
 - Anxiety, depression, suicide risk, addictions, survivor's guilt, health problems, traumatic stress injuries, traumatic brain injuries



About the Student Veterans Resource Center (SVRC)

- Provides a “safe space” for military-connected students
- The SVRC serves approximately 50 students every day
- Average of 3 hours per visit
- The center is usually full during peak hours
- 68% of visitors report that they use the space primarily to study
- 10% report that they use the space primarily to socialize or relax



SVRC Amenities

- Free printing
- Coffee & kitchen
- Convertible pool/study/work table
- Quiet study room & back office
- Check-out items
- Earplugs, whiteboards, blue books etc.
- Bulletin board resources & referrals
- Facebook and newsletter
@UCSDveterans
- 24 hour access



Services and Programs

- Support Services (walk-in, no wait!):
 - Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)
 - Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
 - School Certifying Official (SCO)
 - VA Benefit Counseling
 - Career Advisor
- Events and Initiatives:
 - Military-Connected Welcome Aboard
 - #UCSDVeteransWeek
 - Military-Connected Graduation Celebration
 - Quarterly Workshops
 - Partnership with UCSD Veteran Staff Association and Student Veterans Organization
 - Collaboration with Admissions on Outreach Events (e.g. Warriors to Campus, CCC Region X, etc.)
- NEW Programs:
 - Peer Navigators Program
 - Supporting Student Veterans on Campus
 - Upcoming: Student Success Series



How Can YOU Help?

- Understand the issues
- Recognize student strengths
- Identify and improve existing campus services, to:
 - Foster Peer Support
 - Offer Transitional Support
 - Provide Academic Support
- Create a veteran-friendly space
- Make appropriate referrals
- Reach out to SVRC



Tips for Academic Support

- VA doesn't pay for "extra" classes; consult with School Certifying Official (Lisa Linares)
- Help students schedule classes with time blocks for appointments or job
- Avoid the "hard" classes in the first term; take a light load
- Recommend vet-friendly professors
- Recognize & mitigate common internal and external learning barriers
- Provide flexibility for military duty
- Normalize & encourage tutoring
- Coordinate any accommodations



THANK YOU!

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