Veteran's Resource Center Program Review 2022
A. Program Information
Program Mission Statement

1. Please enter your mission statement here.

We create a supportive environment that enables the success of our veterans through academics, wellness, and camaraderie. We provide support services for student veterans, military service members, and/or their dependents. We are committed to supporting our students in achieving academic success, professional growth, and meaningful employment.

Program Level Student Area Outcomes

2. Please list the program-level student area outcomes.

Student veterans who use the VRC will be more likely to demonstrate successful college skills.

3. Why are these outcomes important?

This primary, department-wide outcome is foundational to the VRC. For student veterans, the transition to civilian life from the military can be quite difficult. The military is highly structured and learning can be very directed and prescriptive. However, civilian life and education is more flexible, with education requiring autonomy and independence. Thus, VRC counseling and programming ease the transition for student veterans, equipping them with resources, knowledge, and skills to navigate a complex, less-rigid system.

4. How will these outcomes be measured?

1. Evaluation of equity gaps in services via data analysis
2. Student self-report (ex: survey)
3. In-group (VRC student veterans) and out-group (non-VRC student veterans) comparison in student success metrics

B. Service Rates
The chart below shows the service rates of self-identified student veterans that accessed VRC services.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total	30%	28%	24%	29%	31%

5. What do you observe in the data above? What do you want the college to understand about service rates?

CCCCO DataMart does not provide an annual count of self-identified student veterans, active duty, and reservist students (SISVARS) taking classes at Foothill, instead providing a quarterly count. However, fall quarter numbers traditionally show the highest number of SISVARS enrolled. To determine the service rate, we took the total number of SISVARS receiving VRC services and divided that by the total number of SISVARS enrolled. For example, in fall 2021 the VRC served 105 SISVARS and there were a total number of 339 SISVARS enrolled, generating a 31% service rate. The average service rate for the past 5 years is 28.4%. There was a dip in service rates in fall 2019 (24%) followed by a slight upward trend with the highest service rate in the past five years (31%) in fall 2021. 28.4% is nonetheless low and can be attributable to the low number of personnel dedicated to the VRC.

6. What actions do your program plan to take in order to achieve your program-level service area outcomes?

Beyond expanding VRC personnel to meet Chancellor's Office guidelines for minimum personnel standards, the current VRC team needs to fully investigate the reasons behind the low service rates. Initial reasons include VA benefit policies, SISVARS utilizing services provided by other departments instead of the VRC, and whether the VRC is accurately counting students utilizing VRC services. Expanded, proactive outreach is also necessary to close the gap and increase service rates. Regularly collecting student feedback after services have been rendered will help to refine services and ensure they are in touch with student needs. Finally, refining data collection processes and tools will ensure the VRC attains an accurate headcount of students receiving services quarterly and annually.

7. What does your program need to execute this action plan?

VRC will be getting a part-time student success specialist dedicated to school certifying duties. This will allow the current full-time VRC specialist/SCO to focus on student programming and center operations, inclusive of leading proactive outreach and developing a data collection process. The data collection process will allow us to incorporate feedback in the refinement of VRC services and ensure accuracy VRC student headcount. Refining the data collection process will also include analysis of the current VRC onboarding/orientation process and a re-examination of the data tools used to pull VRC data.

C. Counseling Student Contacts

The chart below shows the number of counseling student contacts by ethnicity.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
African American	n/a	n/a	5	9	13
Asian	n/a	n/a	9	9	9
Filipinx	n/a	n/a	3	10	5
Latinx	n/a	n/a	21	28	21
Native American	n/a	n/a	2	2	1
Pacific Islander	n/a	n/a	2	4	2
White	n/a	n/a	21	26	21
Decline to State	n/a	n/a	3	2	0

8. What do you observe in the data above? What do you want the college to understand about the number of counseling student contacts by ethnicity? (Please address any ethnic disproportionate impact you note from the above data trends).

The Counseling Student contact data report gives an unduplicated headcount of students accessing VRC Counseling services. Data from 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 were listed as n/a, due to back dating limitations with VRC CW. Data from 2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022 shows unduplicated numbers of students utilizing the VRC counseling not including VRC students who visited other counselors in different departments other than VRC. Surprisingly, there was a slight increase in the African American VRC students utilizing VRC Counseling, but all other groups did not have a significant variation that would be a disproportion.

9. What actions do your program plan to take in order to achieve your program-level service area outcomes?

The VRC would like to see an increased number of VRC students utilizing VRC Counseling while attending Foothill College. VRC Counseling is a FT service and several factors the VRC would look at are, A-Identify the VRC populations that are not connected to VRC, B-Outreach to non-connected VRC students to utilize VRC services, and C-refine the data collection tools used to determine an exact number of VRC students using VRC Counseling services.

10. What does your program need to execute this action plan?

The VRC just recently gained access to an Argos report that would allow us to conduct proactive outreach to non-connected VRC students who are veterans and military affiliated. We would first establish an onboarding process specifically for the non-connected students, so we can properly measure the outcomes of each area: Outreach, Recruitment, and Registration. We would pilot the outreach immediately for Spring 2023 and fine tune to continue to utilize for future terms.

D. Benefits Certification Numbers

The chart below shows the number of benefits certifications overall and by ethnicity.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Total	171	132	141	127	120

11. What do you observe in the data above? What do you want the college to understand about the total number of VRC benefits certifications?

The Benefits Certification Numbers data report gives an unduplicated headcount of students utilizing VA benefits. VA benefit users only access schools that offer approved programs or majors, so they can choose an approved program/major school to utilize their VA educational benefits. Foothill College is marketed on the VA WEAMS website and on VA and United States Department of Defense (DoD) systems for veterans and military affiliated students to access school contact information for enrollment.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
African American	11	6	17	17	21
Asian	23	24	24	13	10
Filipinx	16	9	11	11	9

Latinx	61	41	35	37	38
Native American	1	1	2	3	2
Pacific Islander	6	5	6	5	5
White	51	42	39	41	34
Decline to State	2	4	7	0	1

12. What do you observe in the data above? What do you want the college to understand about VRC benefits certifications by ethnicity? (Please address any ethnic disproportionate impact you note from the above data trends).

The data clearly shows a slight decrease of students using VA benefits since 2019 on. Some factors that may have led to the decrease of VA beneficiaries are pre-pandemic adjustments, limited access to VRC staff (only virtual, phone, and email), the reality of cost of living within area, and post pandemic classes offered by Foothill were at least 75% online, which VA benefit users are required to have at least one course to be fully or hybrid in-person to receive full VA benefits (100% of Housing allowance).

13. What actions do your program plan to take in order to achieve your program-level service area outcomes?

It's important to note that the data in section D provides a snapshot of SISVARS that elect to use their benefits at Foothill College. Therefore, these numbers reflect the way SISVARS perceive Foothill and whether Foothill's marketing and VRC's outreach efforts to SISVARS were successful. Enhanced marketing, outreach to prospective students, and strengthened linkages to the VA as well as military affiliated community organizations will help to increase access for prospective SISVARS

14. What does your program need to execute this action plan?

As mentioned, VRC's ability to effectively complement Foothill's marketing with outreach to prospective students is hampered due to understaffing. Therefore, the primary need is additional staff to meet the Chancellor's Office's minimum standards of personnel (a three-person team): 1 FT VRC Coordinator or Director, 1 SCO, 1 FT counselor. However, with the addition of a part-time specialist, the full-time VRC specialist will have hours freed up to partner with marketing to expand ideas to attract prospect SISVAMS to Foothill. Further, the specialist will also have hours to strengthen community and VA relations as a means to increase SISVARS access to Foothill.

E. Application for Scholarships
The charts below shows the number of students applying to scholarships by ethnicity.

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
African American	1	0	1	1	1
Asian	1	0	1	2	2
Filipinx	1	0	1	1	1
Latinx	7	3	3	4	5
Native American	0	1	0	0	0
Pacific Islander	2	0	0	0	1
White	0	0	4	2	4
Decline to State	0	0	0	0	0

15. What do you observe in the data above? What do you want the college to understand about the number of students applying for scholarships by ethnicity? (Please address any ethnic disproportionate impact you note from the above data trends).

The Application for Scholarship data report gives an unduplicated headcount of VRC applicants that have applied for a VRC Scholarship. Based on the scholarship applicant data report, the numbers of VRC students applying for Veterans scholarships are low. Yet, the number of applicants since 2019 on has slowly increased each year. There appears to be disproportionate impact among African Americans in accessing scholarship data.

16. What actions do your program plan to take in order to achieve your program-level service area outcomes?

VRC must determine the reasons for disproportionate impact among African Americans and incorporate that in tactics to increase overall scholarship application submissions in future years. VRC's approach will involve work-study staff and Student Leadership Internship Program (SLIP) interns to have their own list of students to contact and send email reminders to. VRC will also post flyers within office and have applications available on paper to use and then complete online. Work-study staff and SLIP interns will serve as the primary contact for VRC students. The VRC also plans to hold Financial Aid workshops in Fall terms to prep VRC students to apply for scholarships before winter quarter when the scholarship deadlines is. A VRC program will also be hosted in early winter quarter at the VRC to encourage students to work on and submit their applications.

17. What does your program need to execute this action plan?

VRC Counselor and Specialist needs to determine dates for scholarship deadlines (application opens, deadline to apply) and implement the advertisement of VRC scholarships during VRC Orientation and have application and staff readily available for students to apply and assist. This action plan can be executed in Summer and Fall of 2023 and then deadline reminders in Winter 2024.

F. Service Area Outcome Addendum

1. What are the service area outcomes & strategic objectives for the coming year?

SAO 1: Student veterans who use the VRC will be more likely to demonstrate successful college skills.

SO #1: Increase the service rate to 40% by spring quarter 2024.

SO #2: Hold at least two (2) VRC student success programs each quarter.

SO #2: Increase the number of scholarship applicants from 2021-2022 by 50% in winter 2024.

SO #3: Increase the number of African American scholarship applicants from 2021-2022 by winter 2024.

2. What is your implementation plan for the above-mentioned objectives?

For SO #1, the VRC team will develop a proactive outreach plan by the end of spring 2023 for implementation by summer 2023. For SO #2, the VRC team will develop a calendar of VRC student success programs by the end of spring 2023 for implementation by mid-summer 2023. For SO #3 and #4, the VRC team will hire a dedicated academic coach (or continue to utilize VA work-study student and SLIP interns) to conduct proactive scholarship outreach. One of the VRC student success programs in early winter quarter will be dedicated to encouraging VRC students to apply for scholarships.

3. In the past five academic years, were there any commendations/special mentions identified? If YES, please elaborate.

VRC has been praised for its past military holiday events of connecting Foothill College Campus communities, and neighboring city community organizations with VRC staff and its student population. Two goals for the military holiday events is to bring awareness to both on and off campus communities of the VRC department, and to connect current and new VRC student population to the services and resources provided.

4. In the past five academic years, were there any major citations/findings identified in accreditation, audits or reviews (e.g. areas of improvement, strategic direction, facilities, personnel, etc.)?

No.

5. What actions has the program taken to address the accreditation audit, or review citations/recommendations? What barriers has the program faced in implementing improvements?

N/A

6. What barriers has the program faced in implementing improvements?

Because Foothill College is a quarterly system, there seems to be not enough time to make improvements and implement in a timely manner. VRC is prescheduling deadlines before the start of the academic year to help alleviate the time barrier.

This form is completed and ready for acceptance.