Salt Lake Community College

Veterans Services
External Program Review

May 17-18, 2023

External Review Committee

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Executive Summary

In May of 2023, the external review committee conducted an on-site review of the Veterans Services department at Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) in Salt Lake City, Utah. The committee met with Veterans Services staff, current students with military affiliation, and constituents from various departments across the college (Appendix A, Veterans Service Program Review Schedule). The Veterans Services department was highly engaged in supporting veterans' unique needs, have made improvements since their last Veterans Services Program Review, and are continuing to make improvements with support interdepartmentally.

Strengths of the program

The Veterans Services (VS) program has numerous strengths that make it a robust and comprehensive program, offering flexible solutions to cater to the unique needs of individual supported students. These strengths contribute to the program's overall ability to provide a customized and tailored experience for veterans and eligible individuals.

- Knowledgeable and supportive staff well-versed in military education benefits and veteran resources.
- Comprehensive support services that encompass various aspects of student life, including VA education program certifications and counseling, academic advising referrals, disability accommodations, counseling, and mental health resources.
- Customized experience based on the unique need of each student.
- Accessibility to resources, including those managed by other departments.
- Development of collaborative networks with other SLCC departments, other state educational institutions, state and federal government agencies, and community organizations.

Summary of challenges and areas for continued improvement

Veterans Services faces challenges unique to the population they serve. Leaving the military can be one of the most challenging life changes for a veteran--facing potential difficulties in relating to people without military experience, entering the workforce, creating their own daily structure, and adjusting to a different pace of life and work. Veterans Services also faces new challenges including:

- Frequent changes to state and federal education policies and procedures
- Changes to software used for certifying military benefits
- Increase in students taking online courses that fail to utilize VS or on-campus support
- Loss of knowledgeable staff due to retirement or other opportunities
- Increased fear of violence on campus
- Increase in food insecurity
- Increase in mental health needs

While Veterans Services has implemented processes to overcome these challenges, these are areas that could use continued improvement:

- Training by Veterans Services with other key departments on challenges and stigmas faced by veterans.
- Development of additional veteran specific resources within other departments.
- Mass communication and marketing of campus-wide resources available to students with military affiliation.
- Access to Veterans Services virtually and at satellite campuses.
- Student and staff access to academic advisors during the weeks leading up to semester start dates.
- Number of Salt Lake Technical College (SLTC) programs approved by the Department of Veteran Affairs for GI Bill funding.

Future direction, needs, and priorities

The external review committee recommends that priority be placed on increasing interdepartmental training and collaboration, sharing of resources, and investment in technology. While more detailed recommendations have been listed later in this report, critical needs include:

- Development of a VS interdepartmental committee which meets regularly to discuss ongoing initiatives, targeted marketing plans, and improvement to veteran student support across the college.
- Development of a Veterans Advisory Board made of key personnel, students, and faculty to help elevate voices of veterans on campus.
- Require new faculty training on supporting military in the classroom, how to reduce the stigma of veterans being dangerous, and support offered campus-wide to help with their success.
- Increased interdepartmental training to bring additional awareness college-wide on what it means to be a veteran and support available in helping this student population.
- Increased access, collaboration, and communication with Academic Advising to ensure military students are registered for courses required for degree completion and assisting in verifying transferability to 4-year institutions.
- Investment into increasing Veterans Services marketing and use of technology allowing targeted mass texting to military student population.
- Increase funding toward VS staffing budget to be competitive with the market to attract qualified staff for needed positions, allocate funds to a VS specific Academic Advisor, and retain skilled staff.
- Continued funding of conferences and other military education training opportunities for all VS staff.

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Introduction

The Veterans Services (VS) department of Salt Lake Community College serves military affiliated students across all SLCC locations, with a dedicated Veterans Services Center on the Taylorsville Redwood campus and an office location at the South City campus. Their stated purpose is "supporting those who have served their country by assisting them in obtaining their education benefits in a timely manner, providing semester support, and offering educational tools and resources in a supportive environment to assist the Veteran student and dependents in their path towards graduation." (SLCC Veterans Services Program Review – Self Study, 2023).

Purpose of the review

The reviewing team was responsible for assessing the Veterans Services Program Self Study and conducting interviews with various stakeholders to evaluate the status, effectiveness, and progress of the Veterans Services department at Salt Lake Community College (SLCC). The committee was charged with examining Veterans Services

1) alignment and contribution to SLCC mission, vision, goals.
2) systemic integration of services across departments.
3) quality, efficiency, and effectiveness; and
4) congruence with SLCC values.

The goal of the review was to highlight the future direction, needs, and priorities of Veterans Services.

Methodology

Prior to the site visit, the external review committee was provided and analyzed the Veterans Services Self-Study written by the director of Veterans Services. The committee then conducted a series of in-person interviews with VS staff, military affiliated students, and key department stakeholders. Department staff interviewed were selected by the VS Director based on their role in military student experience (Appendix A, Veterans Service Program Review Schedule). Due to the volume of interviews, the committee was divided to conduct most of the interviews separately. The committee then reconvened to discuss their findings, identify overarching themes, and compile their recommendations.

Findings, Concerns & Recommendations

Veterans Services Staff

The Veterans Services staff are passionate in their support of veterans and developing processes to ensure their success. They have a broad range of personnel resources including a director, receptionists, School Certifying Officials, and counselors. The Director stays abreast of changes with federal and state regulations, adjusting school procedures as needed to prevent interruptions in military students' eligibility for benefits. The School Certifying Officials are well trained in federal and state policies and procedures, attending annual conferences to stay up to date on changing benefit requirements and certification processes. They have completed mandatory on-line requirements regarding certification of education benefits. The staff processes Veteran education benefits in a timely manner and nimbly adapts to any changes students make in their programs of study thus avoiding interruptions in benefits both to the student and the school.

In addition, they VS staff follow SLCC institutional mandates and recommendations. Their staff reflects a diverse population which is characteristic of both the military and civilian community. They are quick to respond to interdepartmental requests to assist in benefit verification, residency status, and registration issues. Unfortunately, due to high staff attrition and the competitive workforce market, VS has faced some challenges in hiring and retaining qualified staff. While this does not appear to have impacted their service to students, it may impact their regular staffing at satellite campuses and proactive outreach to military as part of the Peer Mentor Process.

Veterans Services Facility

The Veterans Services Center, located at the Taylorsville Redwood campus, is a model for nation-wide institutions of higher education. It's conveniently located in the Student Center and close to other Student Affairs departments. They offer multiple one-stop services within this office including dedicated math and engineering tutors, a VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) counselor, and direct access to the Disability Resource Center (DRC) with a dedicated DRC/accessibility advisor. There is ample, private space for processing benefits and counseling. Warm paint colors on the walls, furnishings, and wall mounts are professional and reflect a military culture. It provides a comfortable environment for students to relax from the rigors of education as well as computer stations for study.

The South City office was recently relocated to a larger, well-lit space that is more inviting for students. While they don't offer as many services as the primary Veterans Services Center, it is the second busiest location and regularly staffed to help students seeking services at this location. Space has also been allocated to Veterans Services at other satellite campuses, but they are not regularly staffed. Increase in students taking fully online courses may also increase need for virtual office hours for students unable to come to campus or seeking help outside of campus office hours. The external review committee was unable to determine the level of need at these other locations. We recommend a benefit analysis is completed to determine need of services at other location and need for virtual office hours.

Student Experience

Students interviewed stated their overall experience at SLCC has been positive. They feel the VS staff is very supportive when seeking help and knowledgeable in military benefits. Some students use the VS services extensively, meeting with staff each semester to ensure their education benefits are on track and for other general support. Departments interviewed feel confident in referring students to VS, especially regarding concerns veterans may be hesitant to discuss with individuals who don't have military affiliations. They feel SLCC has a stellar VS program and like the partnerships they have created with the American Indian student club as part of their Veterans Day celebrations.

While there was mostly positive feedback from students and key stakeholders interviewed, there were areas of concerns. These include:

- Access to Academic Advisors – students unaware they must schedule meetings with advisors sometimes 4-6 weeks in advance to a semester starting. They also claimed difficulty receiving help when going to Academic Advising in person.

- Unaware of support with other departments – some students were unaware of the food bank, paid student leadership positions, tutoring services outside of Veterans Services, or services with the Center for Health & Counseling.

- Unaware of requirements for benefits to pay – Some students and departments interviewed indicated there were delays in student funds releasing in a timely due to not completing all requirements for benefits to pay. This causes delays in stipends to students and payment to the school; also resulting in registration and transcript holds to students' accounts.

- Unaware of funding opportunities outside of military benefits – none of the students interviewed were aware of additional funding that could be used in GI Bill benefits like federal grants, work-study, or scholarships. They were also unaware of the Utah Vet Gap program available to students that have exhausted benefits.

- Unaware of services offered within Veterans Services – while students know of the Veterans Services program, some were unaware of all support offered within the center, including tutoring services and access to academic advising.

- Unable to access VS staff at certain times and locations.

External Partnerships

Veterans Services recognizes the importance of collaboration to build their program and actively engages with external stakeholders, such other state educational institutions, state and federal government agencies, and community organizations. The VS program has developed such VA partnerships as VetSuccess, Veterans Integration to Academic Leadership (VITAL), Veterans Upward Bound, and onsite VR&E counselor. By forging partnerships and fostering collaborations, the program enhances its capacity to address the unique needs of veterans and eligible individuals effectively. This student-focused network facilitates the exchange of knowledge, resources, and best practices when supporting veterans and eligible individuals ultimately benefiting the overall SLCC student community.

Interdepartmental Collaboration & Support

The Veterans Services program aims to provide veterans and eligible individuals with the necessary interdepartmental resources for a successful academic journey. All departments interviewed are committed to providing outstanding student experience and identifying ways to increase support for veterans. This joint commitment has led to some significant improvements with other departments, resulting in overall increased student experience and success.

Noteworthy Successes

- Partner departments feel confident in receiving help on veteran concerns, stating VS staff are very responsive and quick in resolving issues.
- Updates to the admission application has helped in early identification of students with military affiliation, which is critical to early Peer Mentor outreach efforts. This provides VS with advanced insight when reaching out to the student creating a proactive and inclusive introduction to the VS Center.
- Collaboration efforts during November with Native American awareness and Veterans Day activities in the form of flag ceremonies and recognition of Native Americans who have served in the military.
- Monthly collaboration with the Office of the Bursar has reduced errors in billing, holds, and repayment of VA debt.
- Collaborative efforts with Testing Services ensures placement tests are completed to verify course authorization for military benefits.
- Physical interoffice connection between VS and the Disability Resource Center and having a dedicated DRC advisor provides discreet access for students seeking accommodations, significantly reducing veteran's anxiety.
- Development of electronic documents by utilizing Etrieve and SharePoint sites have improved tracking of interoffice documents and verification of benefits.

Interdepartmental Areas of Concern

While improvements have been made in some areas, the external review committee has identified overarching areas of concern. Detailed findings with department specific commendations, areas of opportunity, and recommendations have been detailed in Appendix B of this report. General areas of concern are outlined below.

- Insufficient marketing of resources available to veterans outside of Veterans Services office including military specific scholarships, federal aid, student leadership opportunities, the Bruin Pantry, TRIO services, and Career Services support.
- Little to no access to Academic Advisors in the 4-6 weeks prior to a semester start unless appointments are scheduled in advance.
    - This is problematic for new or returning students admitted into SLCC near the start of the semester that are unsure what courses have been accepted for transfer credit and what courses are remaining for degree completion.
    - This can be problematic for veterans that were unaware of early advising appointment requirements and unable to receive help before the add/drop deadline, potentially impacting funding and stipends.
- Lack of interoffice collaboration between VS and the Center for Health and Counseling in utilizing their services or having counselors specifically trained in treating veterans.

- Lack of interoffice collaboration between VS and the Thayne Center in marketing student leadership opportunities or in overcoming barriers to utilizing basic need resources.
- Increased stigmas or assumptions by students and staff of Veterans with PTSD being dangerous.
- Significant loss of knowledgeable and skilled staff due to retirement or staff taking work opportunities elsewhere. The competitive market has made it difficult to fill vacant positions, causing an increase in work for remaining staff across all departments and delays in interdepartmental processes.

Technology

Processes continue to improve with investments and use of new software and technology. Key software that has increased support include:

- MySuccess - A case management software, which acts as a primary location for sharing of information between Student Affairs offices and Academic Affairs faculty and staff. Not all staff have access to this software, though, and it is not consistently used by those with access resulting in gaps in tracking of student interactions.
- Etrieve – Electronic document workflow and retention software – This software has enabled students to submit required verification documentation more easily, increased visibility of documents pending review, and reduced risk of lost documents.
- RingCentral – Cloud Phone System – This has enabled offices to move to virtual settings and provided ability to assist students remotely after traditional campus hours.
- Microsoft Teams/Sharepoint – Departments have been empowered to develop and manage access to sites specific to projects or shared initiatives, increasing visibility and ability to update projects or documents simultaneously. This has overcome some of the previous challenges in sharing documents that were inaccessible to other key stakeholders.

Two concerns were identified in relations to technology:

- Student confusion with the various software systems utilized by different departments, some of which require a separate login from the main MySLCC student portal.
- MySuccess is a robust tool but there is currently no set standard in utilizing notes and tracking student interactions. This software is also limited to specific departments and additional notes may need to still be duplicated in Banner for additional visibility.

Recommendations

Recommendations by the external review committee to address concerns are listed below.

- Development of a VS interdepartmental committee which meets regularly to discuss ongoing initiatives, targeted marketing plans, and improvement to veteran student support across the college.
- Development of a Veterans Advisory Board made of key personnel, students, and faculty to help elevate voices of veterans on campus.
- Increased access, collaboration, and communication with Academic Advising to ensure military students are registered for courses required for degree completion and assisting in verifying transferability to 4-year institutions.
- Investment into increasing Veterans Services marketing; including technology allowing targeted mass texting to military student population.
- Increase funding toward staffing budget to 1) open new VS specific Academic Advising position and 2) be competitive with the market to attract qualified staff for needed positions and retain skilled staff.
- Require new faculty training on supporting military in the classroom and how to reduce the stigma of veterans being dangerous.
- Increased staff training and guidance on use of SLCC shared software, specifically MySuccess and the new MySLCC Student Experience page.

- Increased collaboration between the Thayne Center and VS, including development of a referral process to support veterans' access to student leadership positions and reduce barriers in utilizing basic need resources.
- Increase proactive outreach to military students, preferably text, on important notifications and deadlines, such as scholarship opportunities, academic advising appointments, and enrollment certification deadlines.
- Increased interdepartmental training across campus to bring additional awareness college-wide on what it means to be a veteran and support available in helping this student population.
- Increase referrals to the Center for Health & Counseling and access to SLCC counseling staff specifically trained in aiding veterans in crisis.
- Aligning Salt Lake Technical College programs to meet Veteran Affairs requirements for GI Bill funding.
- Continued funding of conferences and other military education training opportunities for all VS staff.

Results of Review

Alignment with SLCC mission, vision, and goals

Veterans Services (VS) is currently aligned with the mission, values, and goals by providing support to a protected class, assisting them in overcoming challenges unique to service members, and assisting veteran students in pursuit of completing their education. Veteran students and partner departments interviewed feel VS staff provide great service and are well-versed in military education benefits, veteran resources, and offer support tailored to overcome challenges that impact veteran success. In addition, Veterans Services has continued to make improvements to their sites and processes since their last program review to better support their mission, vision, and goals. This includes:

- VS has established a strong Vital Peer Mentor process that encourages early consultations with VS staff to discuss educational goals, special needs, resources, and develop long term support plans.
- VS implemented additional in-house services at the Taylorsville Redwood campus, including dedicated math and engineering tutors and a VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC) counselor, in their pursuit of developing a "one-stop" service location for veterans.
- Resources allocated to renovate the Veterans Services Center at the Taylorsville Redwood campus creating a more welcoming atmosphere, increasing the number of private consultation rooms, and providing direct access to the Disability Resource Center, which reduces a veteran's anxiety in discussing special needs or seeking accommodations.
- Having a dedicated, in-house DRC/Accessibility advisor on staff.
- Resources allocated in moving the South City Veterans Services office to a more inviting location.

Systemic integration of services across departments

Veterans Services has established some integration of services through use of software and collaboration with other departments. The VS program recognizes that transitioning from military service to higher education can present unique challenges. To address this, the program provides comprehensive support services that encompass various aspects of student life. These includes VA education program certifications and counseling, academic advising referrals, disability accommodations, counseling, and mental health resources. Use of MySuccess, Etrieve, and Microsoft Teams has increased visibility of student interactions and improved tracking of required documentation. Establishing new questions within the admission application has also increased visibility to new students with military affiliation that are now included in proactive outreach by Veterans Services.

While strong relationships and services currently exist with the Disability Resources Center, the Office of the Bursar (Accounts Receivable & Cashiering), Residency, and Testing Services, there is some room for improved collaboration with other departments. Significant improvements could be made in integrating services with the Center for Health & Counseling, the Thayne Center, and Academic Advising.

Quality, efficiency, and effectiveness

The Veterans Services (VS) office has developed strong internal practices and streamlined some interdepartmental processes, which have increased the quality of the student experience and effectiveness with interdepartmental tasks. Well-established processes include:

- VS staff are well-versed in education benefits and veteran resources.
- VS staff are easily accessible, supportive, and responsive to students, SLCC faculty, and staff.
- Established VITAL Peer Mentor Program, which support proactive outreach to new and continuing military students.
- Transition from paper documents to digital documents, increasing speed in responding to interdepartmental requests for verifying military residency requirements and military benefit eligibility.
- Streamlined process with the Office of the Bursar, Testing Services, Admissions, and Residency.

While the VS center has established a knowledgeable VS staff and developed strong internal processes, the committee did identify overarching themes impacting quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of veteran support across the college.

- Insufficient development of support with the Thayne Center, Center for Health & Counseling, and Academic Advising.
- Insufficient interdepartmental training college-wide on challenges faced by veterans.
- Military students unaware of all the services offered in various departments at Salt Lake Community College or within Veterans Services.

Congruence with SLCC values

The Veterans Services department and all SLCC departments interviewed strongly reflected SLCC's values. All have a strong focus on student experience and desire to better support the military student population. All departments were engaged, open to learning best practices shared by the external review committee and willing to increase collaborative efforts with Veterans Services to increase support for military students.

Future direction, needs, and priorities of Veterans Services

Veterans Services is doing a great job in supporting their student population and have an impressive program. They should continue in their current path by expanding interdepartmental collaboration and building their "one-stop" services within their Veterans Service Center. Priority should be placed on developing a departmental committee and veteran advisory board to bring additional awareness to veteran barriers, identify methods for increased support, and develop training plans. A targeted text messaging plan should be developed between offices to increase awareness of important deadlines, while also preventing inundating students with too many notifications. Finally, funding should be allocated towards increasing salaries to create new positions that support veterans, help attract skilled employees, and help retain qualified staff.

Appendix A

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Salt Lake Community College
Veterans Services
Program Review Site Visit
May 17th and 18th, 2023

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Site Review Team

➢ **Charles Chandler**: Director of Veterans Services (Retired), Weber State University

➢ **Caleb Vadnais**: Military Process Analyst & Systems Administrator, Western Governors University

➢ **Brooke Jensen**: Analyst 3 – Controller's Office, Salt Lake Community College

Day One - Wednesday, May 17th, 2023			
TIME			
KICK OFF			
8:15am - 8:55am	**Curt, Steve, Shannon, & Review Team** **DEN 1**		
INTERVIEWS			
9:00am - 10:00am	DEPARTMENT	**Financial Aid**	**Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs (ODMA)**	**TRIO**
	INTERVIEWS	**Joshua Montavon** Director **Verity Flurer** Assistant Director	**Dr. Ulysses Tongaonevai** Director	**Thanhtung Thantrong** Director
	REVIEWER			
	ROOM	**Blue Room** STC 031	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-F	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-B
10:00am - 10:15am	**Break**		
INTERVIEWS			
10:15am - 11:15am	DEPARTMENT	**Controller's Office Cashier Services**	**Development Office**	**Admissions - Residency**
	INTERVIEWS	**Ben Booth** Assistant Controller **Ryan Thoroman** Bursar	**Rick Pike** Director	**Lenora Monge** Manager 1 **Abbey Mann** Specialist III
	REVIEWER			
	ROOM	**Den 2** STC 025	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-B	**Blue Room – STC 031** **Teams/Zoom**
11:15am - 11:45am	**Break**		
INTERVIEWS			

11:45am - 1:15pm	Student Interviews and Lunch Review Team Den 2 – STC 025		
1:15pm - 1:25pm	**Break**		

Day One Continued – Wednesday, May 17th, 2023

INTERVIEWS

1:25pm - 1:55pm	DEPARTMENT	**Thayne Center**	**Center for Health and Counseling**	**Testing Services**
	INTERVIEWS	**Timothy Davis** Director	**DaSheek Akwenye** Director	**Kiesha Fehoko** Director
	REVIEWER			
	ROOM	**Den 1** STC 023	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-F	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-B

INTERVIEWS

2:00pm - 3:00pm	DEPARTMENT	**Admissions**	**Career Services**	**Applied Technology**
	INTERVIEWS	**Kate Gildea** Director	**Ella Aho** Director	**Franz Feierbach** Assoc. Dean, SAT/SLTC
	REVIEWER			
	ROOM	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-B	**Blue Room** STC 031	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-F **Teams/Zoom**

Wrap Up / Review agenda for next day

3:00pm - 3:30pm	Steve, Curt, and Review Team Den 1 – STC 023		

CONTINUED BELOW

		Day Two - Thursday, May 18th, 2023		
TIME				
		INTERVIEWS		
	DEPARTMENT	**Disability Resource Center**	**Government Relations**	**Dean of Students**
9:00am - 10:00am	INTERVIEWS	**Jody Katz** Director **Mary Keinz** Veterans Accessibility Advisor	**Scott Brown** Director Local Gov't Relations	**Candida Mumford** Dean of Students/AVP
	REVIEWER			
	ROOM	**Gold Room** STC 062	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-B	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-F
10:00am - 10:15am		**Break / Travel to Westpointe**		
		INTERVIEWS		
	DEPARTMENT	**CDL - Truck Driving**	**Aviation Maintenance**	**Academic Advising**
10:15am - 11:15am	INTERVIEWS	**Bill Tover** Associate Professor	**Celesta Rosklelly** Program Manager I	**Anni Tedder** Director **Scott Wakefield** Advisor 3
	REVIEWER			
		Westpointe Campus	**Teams/Zoom**	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-F
		INTERVIEWS		
	DEPARTMENT	**Veterans Services**		
11:15am - 12:00pm	INTERVIEWS	**Dr. Mike Foster**	**Veterans Services Staff**	**Veterans Services Staff**
	REVIEWER			
	ROOM	**Veterans Services Office** STC 053B-G	**Den 1 – STC 023**	
		REVIEW		
12:00pm - 1:00pm		**Discussion / Working Lunch** **Review Team** **Dr. Brett Perozzi, Interim VP of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management** **Den 2 – STC 025**		
		WRAP-UP		
1:00pm - 1:45pm		**Steve, Curt, and Review Team** **Den 2 – STC 025**		

Appendix B

Interdepartmental Commendations, Areas of Opportunity, & Recommendations Table

Commendations	Areas of Opportunity	Recommendations
Financial Aid		
• Financial Aid provides students with ED's College Financing Plan, meeting Isakson-Roe section 1018 requirements. • SLCC has two veteran specific scholarships and 25% non-tuition specific scholarships that could be used in conjunction with military funding. • Financial Aid sends mass proactive Scholarships reminders to all students each semester.	• Financial Aid only provides financial plans for students applying for FAFSA. Therefore, Veterans may not receive a financial plan if only using military benefits. • No customized scholarship notifications specific for veterans and sent directly to veterans.	• It is recommended that VS verify with Financial Aid that the 2023-24 College Financing Plan is accurately calculating the newly added VA Education Benefits section. • It is recommended that VS verify with Financial Aid that the College Financing Plan is being sent out to all students receiving VA funding and instead of just those that apply for FAFSA. • It is recommended that VS works with scholarships to help raise awareness of the options for students to utilize non tuition and fee specific scholarships in conjunction to their VA funding. • Create a targeted campaign to promote the two veteran related scholarships. This targeted list would be managed by VS as the requirements are related to the students VA funding. • It is recommended that VS verify with Financial Aid what the current processes for students withdrawing due to receive deployment orders.
Office of Diversity & Multicultural Affairs		
• Collaboration efforts during November with Native American awareness and Veteran's Day activities in the form of flag ceremonies and recognition of Native Americans who have served in the military. • ODMA has designated staff called a "Care Team" to reach out to students who need additional study skills • ODMA has a newly renovated campus location, and its' director has offered to provide a designated office for a veteran's advisor to give greater access to the Veterans Services office.	• Veteran demographic information is not shared with ODMA, preventing targeted outreach to veterans.	• ODMA recommended future partnership to engage veterans by addressing relevant social and cultural issues including guest speakers and activities he described as "high touch." • Sharing of veteran demographic data between ODMA and VS to provide Veteran specific "Care Team" support.
TRIO		
• Assist with campus visits, cultural events, undergraduate research projects, FAFSA support, and applications to 4-year institutions. • Have tuition waivers and grant funds that can be used to cover gaps in funding. • Pursuing a TRIO Veteran Grant to help fund positions within TRIO dedicated to supporting Veterans.	• Very small portion of veterans utilize TRIO or aware of STEM scholarship. • Typically, veterans are only referred to TRIO when funding has been exhausted or on academic probation. This is typically too late since there is a waiting list for services. • Application for TRIO is on a different software from MySuccess, requires pre-approval to access, and can be confusing for students to navigate on their own.	• Refer VS student to TRIO upon enrollment to discuss services they offer, verify eligibility, and early application for services. • Additional student support in completing the TRIO application, potentially included as part of VS Peer Mentor appointment. • VS collaboration with TRIO in their application for TRIO Veteran Grant.
Office of the Bursar		
• The Controller's Office has a standing monthly meeting with VS to maintain a strong and proactive relationship.	• Only one SCO and the VS Director are point of contacts for Cashiering and Accounts Receivable. If neither are available, there	• Work with the Controller's Office and Cashier Services to identify a back-up Point of Contact is not the VS Director.

• Cashier Services has a minimal number of complaints from students having issues with their VA funding. Most time it is the result of students who forgot to request certification through VS. • VS has provided a main point of contract for Bursar staff, Matt Butcher, for any issues related to veteran funded students.	may be delays in resolving a student questions or concern in a timely manner.	• While the yearly reporting fees paid to SLCC by the VA are placed in a restricted account it is recommended that restrictions be placed on charge codes as a second layer of ensuring the proper usage of the funds.

Development Office

• The Development Office currently has two veteran-specific scholarships located in the welding department and trade fields.	• Currently, the scholarship eligibility is narrow and limited to tuition only. The Director believes this has contributed to students transferring to other schools with more accessible scholarships.	• Director recommends that there be a collaborative effort with specific donors and with Veterans Services to broaden scholarship paraments to assist with supplies and possible stipends. • The Director would encourage greater dialogue with Veterans Services, campus departments/programs, perhaps quarterly, to review the list of veterans who are using grants and scholarships and to make greater access to information to potential recipients. This would involve increased marketing efforts by both Development and Veterans Services.

Admissions/Residency

• The Admissions Department recently invested in a new CRM system for managing admission applications. The new system allows for more in depth use of dynamic forms allowing the student to declare their intended funding. This provides the VS with advanced insight when reaching out to the student creating a proactive and inclusive introduction to the VS Center. • Admissions feels that they have a strong working relationship with VS. They can reach out to VS and receive support from SCOs within a timely manner. • The Admissions Department also invites the VSC to present as part of their yearly training to help maintain awareness of SLCC veteran population. • Admissions offers several campus tours both in person and virtual. • Residency works directly with the VS regarding students establishing resident student status under UT HB R124 and R512.6. • Recently implemented a new Etrieve form which allows students to upload required residency information electronically.	• Recent delays in students being notified of admissions after application (sometimes taking up to 72 hours).	• Include the VS Center as part of campus tours for students that identify as veterans. This information can be asked when scheduling tours or collected from the student's admissions application. Any such appointments should be forwarded to VS to allow them time to ensure that the proper coverage to support the student will be available during their tour. • Continued collaboration with OIT to improve syncing of software systems, decrease time from application, notice of acceptance, and access to student portal.

Thayne Center

• Purpose is to connect students to the community, resources, and programs. • Provides basic need resources for students such as food, stable housing, and access to adequate technology.	• There appears to be little to no collaborative efforts between the Thayne Center and VS. • Thayne Center staff have not been trained on specific challenges veterans face, their	• Work with the Thayne Center to identify current incentives being offered to recurrent/retain students positions in Student Leadership. In the cases where

• Operates a food pantry accessible to all students at multiple campus locations. • Provides student leadership opportunities	potential hesitancy when seeking assistance with "basic needs", and how to encourage use of their services.	the current incentive does not offer the same level of monetary support to a student using VA funding consider offering alternative incentives. • Help remove barriers to entry for the Bruin Pantries for students that may feel discouraged to attend. This could be done by allowing students to complete the Bruin Pantries' liability form at the VS Center along with providing the student with a reusable bag. Such a process would allow for VS staff to accompany the student to the pantry without creating the feeling that the student is being monitored. • Work with the Thayne Center to create a yearly veterans awareness training program between VS and the Bruin Pantries. • Create a food-drive sponsored by the VS Center to help indirectly raise awareness of the Bruin Pantries to veteran students. Such events help create a pay-it-forward method for students that may not otherwise utilize the services as they feel like they are exploiting the resource when used in conjunction with their VA funding. • Reach out to the Thayne Center's Basic Needs Coordinators regarding additional housing and community resources that are available to veterans. Try and set up yearly training/refresh meetings for both departments to stay current. • Allow for both Centers to integrate their services as part of their new hire onboarding process. This helps ensure that general knowledge of such resources is not lost when high turnover occurs.
Center for Health & Counseling		
• SLCC has a dedicated Center for Health & Counseling offering low to no cost mental health and medical services to current students. • Walk-in crises support is available at three locations, with no charges and no insurance required.	• Currently have a new Director that has not had the opportunity to work with VS. • Veterans are not currently encouraged to utilize the Center for Health and Counseling as a resource. Students are currently referred to Dr. Foster, the Veterans Services Vital Coordinator, as primary resource for counseling veterans. • It does not appear that Counseling Center Personnel have received training specific to help veterans, such as PTSF, anger management, stress management, reintegration into civilian life and challenges veterans face in higher education.	• SLCC Veterans Services work to create a strong alliance with the Center for Health and Counseling to provide in-service training. • Increase access to SLCC counseling staff specifically trained in aiding veterans in crises. • Increase referrals to the Center for Health & Counseling • Recommend Counseling Center staff utilize the existing "Got Your Six" training offered by the Utah Department of Veterans Affairs.
Career Services		
• Career Services provides the following events and services: Cooperative/vocational experiences, Employer networking, Career fairs, needs assessment, resume writing, Mock	• Career services is unable to identify the veteran population and, therefore, does not have any marketing targeting this group.	• The Director recommended regular coordination and data sharing among Career Services, Veterans Services and Academic Advisement. She also recommended using all available

interviews (remote) using "Stand Out" software		communication and marketing resources to reach out to a broader veteran audience.
Testing Services		
• In collaboration with VS, testing has implemented a process to identify students with military affiliation during enrollment which requires them to complete placement testing to verify the need for remedial courses.	• SLCC does not currently offer Prior Learning Assessment testing for earning credit for skill-based work, like welding.	• Investigate potential of Prior Learning Assessment testing at SLCC for earning credits toward degree completion.
Applied Technology		
• Ongoing discussions are being held on increasing the number of SLTC programs approved by Dept of Veteran Affairs. • Competency-based programs allow students flexibility to complete coursework quicker than a traditional semester. • Student with prior experience/training can use that experience to earn a certificate quicker.	• Competency-based programs are not approved by the Dept. of Veteran Affairs for GI Bill funding. This significantly reduces the number of veterans seeking certificates in those programs since the GI Bill is their primary use of funding for higher education.	• Continued collaboration with VS, Applied Technology, and the Department of Veteran Affairs on developing certificate program that meet Department of Veteran Affairs program requirements.
Disability Resource Center		
• The DRC can provide students with a variety of individualized accommodations and resources, including assistive technology, testing accommodations, access to early registration, campus event access, and more. • VS has an in-house Veterans Accessibility Advisor (VAA) and a testing lab. • The VAA is accessible through the onsite DRC testing lab off the VS Center entry and through the VS Center central office area. This strategic placement provides direct support to students and the staff of the VS Center. The placement of the VAA and accessibility to move freely throughout the VS Center helps decrease the stigma of students requesting DRC services as the VAA is presented in the same manner as any other service provided by the VS Center.	• VAA advisor is advertised on the DRC site, only.	• Highlight the role of Veterans Accessibility Advisor (VAA) on the VS site rather than a direct link to the DRC.
Government Relations		
• Government Relations closely monitors how the Utah State Legislature supports higher education generally and veterans' education and benefits specifically. They coordinate the progress, modifications, and outcomes as they relate veterans' higher education policy to the State of Utah Director of Military and Veteran Affairs and the SLCC Veterans Services department.	• The Director identified a specific governmental internship that his department makes available to all students. This grant funds internships and pays for housing and a substantial stipend in the Washington DC area. It has the potential to recruit veterans from a broad range of academic disciplines who may be reluctant to pause their current GI Bill entitlements, however, the monetary amount is comparable to their existing full-time benefits.	• Recommend collaboration with this office and to increase communication to veterans of special internship opportunities available to students.
Aviation Maintenance		
• The Aviation Maintenance Technician program at Salt Lake Community College is one of 150 FAA approved Part 147 schools in the US.	• Lack of veteran service staff presence on the Westpointe campus. • SLCC does not currently offer FAA tests that students must take that are not part of the program.	• Veteran students may not be aware of the additional services provided by the VS due to its location and distance from the AP - Aviation Education Center and Westpointe Center. Recommend utilizing designated area at the Westpointe Center

		○ Weekly site office hours ○ Reach out at the start and end of each semester just to show face. - Offer a more streamlined digital VS presence to showcase VS resources personalized at the student level. - Recommended researching viability and ability to offer FAA tests on campus.
Academic Advising		
- One advisor allocates time to Veteran Services each Thursday and is knowledgeable on some of the issues Veterans face. - Attempt once a year training with VS and Academic Advising. - Academic advisor mentors (non-advisors) triage walk-in students to answer minor or uncomplicated questions and can set up appointments with academic advisors for a later time. - Pathways software outlines courses required for degree completion, so students can utilize this when registering for courses on their own. - Offer after-hour virtual assistance between 4:30-7:00.	- While an advisor allocates some time to VS, it is not dedicated time every week and typically unable to dedicate time the weeks before the semester starts since working with the general student population. VS students seem unaware of these office hours. - Students can change programs without consulting advisors or department heads. They may not be aware of potential financial consequences of doing this without discussing it with VS. - Not all advisors are aware of funding issues that may occur when veterans take courses outside of the required program. - Pathways software will not prevent a student from adding a course outside of their degree requirements, which would not be funded by the GI Bill. - Advisors have up to 700 students assigned to them, meaning response may be slower depending on students reaching out for help. - Walk-in appointments are typically not offered since Advisors allocate non-appointment time to responding to emails or preparing for an upcoming appointment.	- It is recommended that both Academic Advising and Veterans Services use all methods of social media and departmental websites to strongly encourage student toward early advisor sign-up communication to avoid delays in registration and interruption of veteran education entitlements. - It is recommended that funds be allocated to support the hiring of a dedicated military academic advisor housed within VS. - It is recommended that Academic Advising work with Pathways in preventing non-required courses from populating as part of their program when manually added by students.