

Continuing Initiatives

1. Western Nevada College instituted a major effort at retaining and graduating veterans by opening a new Veterans Resource Center. While the first Center accomplished a major goal of establishment of a Veterans Resource Center, it was cramped, and the small space limited the number of student veterans who could actually utilize the center from a mentoring/tutoring standpoint. The new space is over four times larger, enabling the space to be divided into a general meeting room with distinct, separate areas for mentoring, tutoring, and study areas and a separate room equipped with computers and a white board for group tutoring/access to online classes. In the first two months since opening, VRC usage increased three fold over the old space, enabling more veterans on campus to be served.
2. Student Veteran Workers, who are on duty the entire time VRC is open, are now all required to complete the Nevada Veteran Advocacy Program, administered through the Nevada Dept. of Veteran Services (NDVS). The Program consists of completing twenty modules on the State of Nevada website. The modules were developed to increase the knowledge of any individual on U.S. Veterans Administration benefits, ranging from VA home loans to burial benefits. The ability of student veteran workers to answer questions that student veterans have about their VA benefits assists student veterans get maximum utilization of benefits, which results in less lost time from classes while a student pursues a question on his or her own by traveling to the Reno VA, which is only open during normal working hours.
3. A Veteran Service Officer from the Disabled American Veterans visits the VRC every Tuesday to meet with and assist student veterans who need to submit disability claims or follow up on claims already pending. Again, having this service on campus negates student veterans from having to leave campus during normal class hours to get serious disability claims taken care of.
4. The Coordinator of the VRC is also the faculty advisor for all student veterans and has been given access to OnBase and Peoplesoft, which greatly assists in advising students, identifying potential problems and developing solutions before the problems become critical. The Coordinator gets a report at the end of the semester with all student veteran's grades and reviews them, calling in and meeting with all who do not attain a 2.0 GPA or who have shown a significant drop off in their GPA.
5. The Coordinator of the VRC is now an ASIST trainer who conducts two day training seminars on Suicide Intervention. The Pre-Admissions advisor is also ASIST trained. All Student Veterans workers are all required to attend safeTALK, a four hour suicide awareness seminar to combat the growing epidemic in the veteran community.