



## VETERAN SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN 2013/2014

### Assumptions

The following have guided the development of this strategic plan:

- There is a sincere desire to improve student veteran success
- There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to student veteran success
- Veterans' participation in higher education will continue to increase
- Student veterans are an at risk population
- Veterans exist in a complex system
- Student veteran success at CBC is, in part, tied to the availability and use of institutional and community resources

### Mission

The Veteran Services Office supports student veterans and service members in achieving individual academic goals; promotes academic and social integration; and maximizes college, community, and national resources in support of student veteran success.

### Vision

Columbia Basin College is recognized by student veterans, the Tri-Cities community, the State, and its regional partners for best practices and commitment to veterans' success.

### Core Themes

- **Develop and Allocate Resources**—secure resources for identified best practices, current, and anticipated veterans' needs.
- **Provide a Supportive Environment**—Ensures responsive and efficient practices, and develops and administers specific programs in support of student veteran needs.

- **Reduce Barriers for Veterans**—develop policies and practices that minimize barriers to student veteran success.
- **Outreach and Community Engagement**—develop partnerships with community organizations.
- **Assess and Utilize Data to Guide Practice**—through qualitative and quantitative methods, regularly assess the student veteran population, identify trends, clarify and anticipate needs, and use data when considering changes to institutional policy.

## Objectives and Indicators

**Develop and Allocate Resources**—secure resources for identified best practices, current, and anticipated veterans’ needs. In practice, this theme includes leveraging institutional funding, space, personnel, technologies, new grant opportunities, and fundraising in support of student veteran success

Objectives:

- A. Fundraising activities—donations will yield financial support for veteran scholarships and other emerging needs

Indicators:

- Increases in donations to CBC Foundation for veterans related accounts
- Number of new scholarships formed for veterans
- Number of scholarships awarded to veterans

- B. New grant opportunities—awarding of new grants tied to veteran success

Indicators:

- Addition of resources in support of student veterans
- Increases in funding opportunities to student veterans

- C. Veterans Services Center—institution commits full-time staff and appropriates space to accommodate Veterans Services staff and functions

Indicators:

- Dedicated office space for director, certifying official, VITAL psychologist, VA work study students, VetCorps member
- Institution designates full-time director and certifying official

- D. VITAL Grant—support and continue VITAL grant partnership

Indicators:

- Renewal of VITAL grant partnership with CBC and WSU-TC for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years
- Demonstrated increase in student participation beyond baseline year 2012

- E. Yellow Ribbon Program—participate in Yellow Ribbon match funding for BAS out of state veteran students

Indicators:

- College commitment to Yellow Ribbon match with VA
- BAS students participating in Yellow Ribbon program

✓ *Supports & Keys: (1) Create a culture of trust and connectedness across the campus community to promote well-being and success for veterans. (2) Ensure consistent and sustained support from campus leadership. (4) Coordinate and centralize campus efforts for all veterans, together with the creation of a designated space (even if limited in size). (8) Develop systems that ensure sustainability of effective practices for veterans.*

**Provide a Supportive Environment**—Ensures responsive and efficient practices, and develops and administers specific programs in support of student veteran needs. In practice, this theme addresses the central role of Veteran Services, which is to create and sustain quality student support services, and enhance academic and social integration opportunities for student veterans

Objectives:

A. Faculty and Staff—provide multiple opportunities for faculty and staff to learn about and support the student veteran population

Indicators:

- Number and types of veterans related workshops
- Attendance of staff and faculty at workshops
- Veteran student climate survey results (in development)
- Number and types of communications to faculty and staff (as evidenced by campus/department emails, newsletters)
- In-service presentations
- Development of an opt-in early intervention & student veteran monitoring program

B. Decision Making Tools—empower student veterans with user friendly tools to guide use of education benefits

Indicators:

- Creation of VA chapter benefits charts and decision trees
- Creation of benefits calculators based upon VA prescribed formulas

C. VA Certification—provide timely and accurate certification of VA sponsored benefits

Indicators:

- Satisfaction survey results
- Accuracy of certifications

D. Early and Proactive Advising—encourage the development of academic plans as a means of clarifying goal achievement and to reduce delays in VA benefits payments

Indicators:

- Student veterans participating in early degree planning and course registration
- Fewer schedule changes

- Decreases in changes to VA Once
- E. Social Integration—provide multiple opportunities for veterans to connect with students and other veterans
- Indicators:
- Veteran student climate survey results (in development)
  - Veterans participating in clubs
  - Veterans attending college sponsored activities and events
  - Quarterly veterans needs assessment data
  - Veterans participating in college sponsored community service projects
  - Student veteran mentorship program participation
- F. Academic Integration—provide multiple and ongoing opportunities for one to maximize and utilize academic support resources toward espoused goal achievement
- Indicators:
- Veteran students participating in formal faculty/staff mentorships
  - Veteran persistence and transfer rates
  - Participation in veteran-to-veteran tutoring sessions
  - Veterans utilizing faculty and staff advising
- G. Vocational/Career Exploration—provide opportunities for student veterans to explore career interests and related educational pathways
- Indicators:
- Career inventory sessions
  - Career and academic advising sessions

✓ *Supports 8 Keys: (6) Utilize a uniform set of data tools to collect and track information on veterans, including demographics, retention and degree completion. (7) Provide comprehensive professional development for faculty and staff on issues and challenges unique to veterans. (8) Develop systems that ensure sustainability of effective practices for veterans.*

**Reduce Barriers for Veterans**—develop policies and practices that minimize barriers to student veteran success. In practice, this theme includes ongoing consideration of practices, policies, and other system related components that could be adjusted, and/or augmented to maximize student veteran success

Objectives:

- A. CBC Institutional Policies—influence the review and development of institutional policies with consideration given to the unique needs and experiences of CBC’s veteran population

Indicators:

- Successful implementation of a veterans early registration policy at CBC (in response to HB 1109)
- Development and implementation of a new CBC prior learning of assessment/experience (PLA/PLE) policy which awards credit to a veteran for time in service and maximizes military

- smart transcript credits (see SIU policy)
  - CBC policy requiring military transcripts for evaluation
- B. Employment—provide opportunities for student veterans to clarify and achieve career and employment goals

Indicators:

- Implementation of Veterans Employment Seminar (WKSP 000)
- Veteran participation in WKSP 000
- Sponsorship of employment fairs
- Job placement rates

- ✓ *Supports & Keys: (5) Collaborate with local communities and organizations, including government agencies, to align and coordinate various services for veterans. (8) Develop systems that ensure sustainability of effective practices for veterans.*

**Outreach and Community Engagement**—develop partnerships with community organizations. In practice, CBC representatives actively participate in community events and promote education resources for veterans

Objectives:

- A. Outreach to Units—provide local branch units information about the use of VA and branch specific educational benefits

Indicators:

- Workshops offered during weekend drills
- MOU with unit commanders to provide resource information

- B. Veterans Organizations—collaborate with local service organizations in support of student veteran success

Indicators:

- CBC collaborations with public service organizations such as Columbia Basin Veterans Coalition, WDVA, and WorkSource

- C. Partner with VA in Washington State—provide additional partnerships with VA in support of student veterans

Indicators:

- CBC renews MOU with Spokane VA listing CBC dental hygiene clinic as a provider

- ✓ *Supports & Keys: (1) Create a culture of trust and connectedness across the campus community to promote well-being and success for veterans. (5) Collaborate with local communities and organizations, including government agencies, to align and coordinate various services for veterans.*

**Assess and Utilize Data to Guide Practice**—through qualitative and quantitative methods, regularly assess the student veteran population, identify trends, clarify and anticipate needs, and use data when considering changes to institutional policy. This theme is critical as there is little data that specifically addresses common assumptions about student veterans and their needs. In practice, this theme allows CBC to uncover,

problematize, and be responsive to challenges and needs specific CBC student veterans

Objectives:

A. Assess Needs—identify assessment strategies that uncover and clarify student veteran needs at CBC

Indicators:

- Development and administration of needs assessment
- Utilization of assessment findings

B. Employ Qualitative and Quantitative Methods—utilize multiple research orientations to depict CBC veterans

Indicators:

- Discussion of research findings

C. Utilize Institutional Data—use institutional data to track information on veterans, examine retention, transfer and degree completion

Indicators:

- Quarterly enrollment reports

✓ *Supports 8 Keys: (6) Utilize a uniform set of data tools to collect and track information on veterans, including demographics, retention and degree completion.*