

Subject Matter Expert Review
TAACCCT Grant: *Building Nursing Pathways*
Findings & Report

The purpose of the subject matter expert review process is to assure the quality of materials developed and used at Bellingham Technical College under the *Building Nursing Pathways* grant (Trade Adjustment Assistance and Community College Career Training, Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor).

Deliverable Title: Subject Matter Expert Review: Building nursing Pathways

Date of Review: 31AUG2016-12SEP2016

Subject Matter Expert: Jarid Corbitt

Subject Matter Expert Credentials and/or Qualifications:

I, Jarid Corbitt, have been working in higher education since 2005 and working with student veterans, military, and their dependents since 2008. I have attended, participated, and presented at several student veteran focused conferences, events, and workshops throughout the past eight years. Working closely with the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA), local veteran support agencies, and student veterans, I am responsible for creating and managing Whatcom Community College's Veteran Services Program and all supporting programming associated with the successful implementation of support programs and services at Whatcom Community College as they pertain to student veterans. I have trained and supervised student employees and part time staff members who advise and certify student veterans, military, and their dependents at Whatcom Community College. I have successfully implemented prior learning assessment policies and procedures at Whatcom Community College in relation to state and federal laws concerning VA education benefits and their application to students studying at Whatcom Community College. Currently in my position as Assistant Director of Veteran Services at Whatcom Community College I am responsible for supervising all academic advising, event planning, and benefit certification for over 200 student veterans annually. I am Whatcom Community College's point of contact for all matters relating to veteran and military education.

1. Synopsis of Findings:

Excellent knowledge of the current needs of student veterans and methods of support specific to Bellingham Technical College (BTC) and Nursing pathways.

Identified the need for a full time veteran focused position at BTC.

Information and programs detailed within this report are supported by a myriad of national research aimed at supporting the service member's transition from military service to higher education.

Many of the ideas expressed in this report are compliant and address policies and procedures required to maintain satisfactory compliance with VA education regulations.

- Comprehensive tracking system to monitor satisfactory progress
- Timely processing and evaluation of prior learning and awarding of college credits when applicable

Some recommendations will require permanent funding to maintain continuity of services and support.

2. Content Strengths:

Clear ideas of what is needed to improve services, resources, and support for student veterans at BTC.

- Dedicated space designed for student veterans to help form community and ease transition from military to higher education
- Critical need for a full time employee committed to advising, monitoring, and supporting student veterans.
- Alternative methods of applying prior credit to increase enrollment and completion of programs.

Recognize that making these supportive measures real and lasting will take collaboration with campus leadership, faculty, students, and community partners.

Identified that student veterans are less likely to be successful when they lack guidance and support in a higher education setting. Established campus assessments to measure student veterans' ability to integrate socially and succeed academically.

3. Areas for Improvement:

Develop specific and measurable program and student learning outcomes for each program area associated with student veterans.

- Measure outcomes annually, or after specific events.
- Adjust program and support mechanisms as needed
- Annual needs assessment for students

Comprehensive tracking system for both students utilizing VA benefits and non-VA student veterans.

- Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- Enrollment patterns
- Graduation and career goals

Gain administrative support for full time permanent staff member dedicated to working with, supporting, and advocating for student veterans, military, and their dependents.

Cultivate a strong collaborative relationship with disability support services (DSS) and actively work to reduce barriers involved with disabled student veterans accessing DSS.

4. Other Observations:

Collaboration with the Washington State Student Achievement Council (WSSAC) and Washington State Training and Education Board – State Approving Agencies for VA Education program approval and compliance with state and federal laws concerning student veterans utilizing VA education benefits.

Expand community partnerships to include mental health support for student veterans, career focused mentorship, job shadow, and training opportunities within regional VA medical facilities.

Develop alternative methods of prior learning assessment focused around entry services

- English placement – self placement for student veterans
- Credit by exam/presentation for shorter term certificates or practical skills

Ensure fast track models recognize that GI Bill® recipients are negatively impacted by programs offering only online or hybrid modes of instruction. Offer GI Bill® students at least one pure face-to-face course per quarter to ensure maximum advantage from GI Bill® benefits.

Signature of Subject Matter Expert: 

Date: 09/12/2016

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