

#4

**COMPLETE**

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Page 1: Classified Position Request Form

**Q1**

Please enter the following:

Department	<b>Veterans Services</b>
Position Title	<b>Veterans Specialist</b>
Salary Range	<b>\$43,320</b>
Annual Salary at Step B*	<b>B - 28</b>
Hours/week and # of months (e.g., 10-month, 11-month, 12-month)	<b>40 hours a week/12 months</b>

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**Q2**

Current goal this position will directly advance/support

40 hours a week/12 months

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**Q3**

How will this position directly advance/support the goal listed above?

We are committed to the delivery of comprehensive support services for student veterans and Dependents. This position would help ensure that the unique needs from student veterans and dependents are met by coordinating with various campus services. Duties and responsibilities for this position will assist in increasing the students we serve at the veterans' center.

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**Q4**

What type of position is being requested?

Increase in the FTE for the position, specify the position classification and number:  
This position is currently funded through a grant at .45 FTE.

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**Q5**

Please attach the description for the position classification (contact GCCCD Human Resources to obtain this).

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**Respondent skipped this question**

**Q6**

What are the actual duties and responsibilities that are specific to this requested position that you would like to highlight to help the Classified Hiring Priorities Committee understand the need for this position?(200 words or less)

1. Assists and meets with students applying for various programs, services, and benefits including Veterans and dependents; processes military tuition requests for tuition assistance; refers students to various programs and services.
2. Maintains thorough knowledge of Veterans educational benefits to provide the best possible information to prospective and enrolled student veterans to help them maximize their eligibility and achieve educational goals.
3. Work with relevant enrollment offices to develop and implement strategies to enroll and retain highly successful student Veterans.
4. Assists student veterans with filing of disability documentation and advocate on behalf of their special needs.
5. Assist in the planning and conduction of recruitment activities for veterans including, providing information on the admissions, testing, and enrollment procedures to prospective students.
6. Develop, maintain, and disseminate informational and instructional handouts to assist military students with understanding, applying for benefits, and maintaining eligibility.
7. Counsel students on their potential eligibility for various chapters of the GI Bill and assist with coordination of military benefits with financial aid.

**Q7**

Please address the following: How are the duties of the requested position currently being performed, if at all? How does the lack of this position impact the program or service area? What impact, if any, have frozen or vacant positions within the department had on services or staff workload? (200 words or less) (Rubric Criteria 1)

Many duties are not performed due to the lack of resources. Veterans Services has a temporary VRC specialist that assists with some of the duties and is employed at 19 hours week. A challenge facing our Veterans Services program is that we currently only have one full time employee. We currently employ a Veterans Services Specialist at .45 FTE that performs a variety of technical duties to assure eligible students receive available veteran benefits and educational services; evaluates military experience and advises student applicants on veterans educational benefits; explains program regulations and policies; provides assistance and information in person and on the telephone regarding various General Issue (G.I.) Bill programs, VA tutorial assistance, work-study benefits, and other services. However, the ability to perform the duties as outlined in the duties and responsibility description is greatly affected by the limited the hours the .45 FTE temporary Veterans Services Specialist. Veterans services currently has only one full time employee. Below is a list of employee at Veterans Services:

- One fulltime Certifying Official
- One counselor at .5 FTE
- Veterans Center Coordinator at .5 FTE (Grant Funded)
- Veterans Center Specialist at .45 FTE (Grant funded)

The Veterans Center coordinator and specialist positions are grant funded and are temporary. Services such as outreach, monthly workshops, assists student veterans with filing of disability documentation would be greatly reduced. On-going education and training for students, faculty, staff, and the greater community on issues and opportunities relevant to student veterans, military personnel, and their family members that foster a deeper awareness and understanding would also be impacted. A Veterans Services staff that only has one fulltime certifying official and on .5 FTE counselor is unable to sustain the services that are currently offered.

**Q8**

How has the program/service area changed over the most recent five academic years and/or how is it expected to change within the next five years (i.e. growth, additional services, increased workload and reorganization) that warrants this position? \*\*Please use both quantitative and qualitative data including, but not limited to: enrollment and productivity data, staffing or other studies, surveys, volume of students or employees served, total comp time accrued, number of hourly/intern/volunteer/work-study, and services provided.\*\* (200 words or less) (Rubric Criterion 2)

A current comparison report shows an improvement in student veteran's GPA. It has steadily improved in the last four years when compared to the general student population. The report includes data from 2017-2018 to 2020-21, these are some of the highlights:

- 2017-2018 Veterans "mean academic year GPA" compared to the general student population (2.71 versus 2.88)
- 2018-2019 Veterans "mean academic year GPA" compared to the general student population (2.70 versus 2.86)
- 2019-2020 Veterans "mean academic year GPA" compared to the general student population (2.89 versus 2.98)
- 2020-2021 Veterans "mean academic year GPA" compared to the general student population (2.95 versus 2.87)

Student veteran's data also shows course retention is higher and has steadily increased compared to general student population.

- 2017-2018 Veterans course retention academic year mean compared to the general student population (90.2% versus 87.7%)
- 2018-2019 Veterans course retention academic year mean compared to the general student population (89.1% versus 87.9%)
- 2019-2020 Veterans course retention academic year mean compared to the general student population (86.4% versus 84.9%)
- 2020-2021 Veterans course retention academic year mean compared to the general student population (91.5% versus 88%)

Student veteran's data also shows Academic Year Units Completed is higher compared to general student population.

- 2017-2018 Veterans Academic Year Units Completed compared to the general student population (13.5 versus 12.7)
- 2018-2019 Veterans Academic Year Units Completed compared to the general student population (12.8 versus 12.4)
- 2019-2020 Veterans Academic Year Units Completed compared to the general student population (13.4 versus 12.4)
- 2020-2021 Veterans Academic Year Units Completed compared to the general student population (14.2 versus 12.6)

Cuyamaca College Veterans Services has received funds from the State. The funds allocated from the state is being used for part-time staff. In particular, a Veterans Center Specialist was hired in 2018. Veteran students rely on educational benefits from the VA. The students need specific and guided pathways to meet the limited time requirements for their educational benefits. An increase in staffing is crucial in increasing engagement activities and assisting with the management of duties of the Veterans Center. An increase in staffing is critical to sustaining the operations and growth of the Veteran Center. Overall, Veteran Services strives to increase the likelihood that veteran students will successfully transition from the military environment to campus life, and that students receive much needed support for completing their educational goals. The State funds has assisted in improving our institutional capacity to provide support services and we believe it has led to an increase in retention and GPA among our veteran students.

**Q9**

Which of the College's strategic priorities will this position most directly support? Note: Selecting more than one strategic goal will not impact the Classified Hiring Priorities Committee rating of the position.

**Guided Student Pathways,  
Student Validation and Engagement,  
Organizational Health**

**Q10**

Please explain how the requested position will support the college strategic priority(ies) identified above. (200 words or less) (Rubric Criterion 3)

The Veterans Center Specialist primary duties is to maintains thorough knowledge of Veterans educational benefits to provide the best possible information to prospective and enrolled student veterans to help them maximize their eligibility and achieve educational goals. The Veterans Center Specialist is a key member of the student success team. Veteran students are attending on educational benefits and need support along the path. The position supports guided pathways as a member of the veterans student success team, providing classified support and a first point of contact for veteran students, and dependents. At Cuyamaca College student veterans are impacted by an identified range of academic and non-academic barriers including: difficulty in transitioning from military to civilian life, mental health issues, limited finances, poor study habits, and familial challenges. As a result, our student veterans face unique social, academic and physiological issues that differ from our typical student population. The Veterans Center Specialist is aligned with Student Validation and Engagement and Organizational Health. The engagement aspect of this position occurs in the support this position provides to engagement activity coordination, outreach to the veteran community in east county and at military bases and student support referrals to on and off campus services.

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**Q11**

How will the position impact the ability of the program or service area to innovate and meet changing needs? (200 words or less) (Rubric Criterion 3)

A counseling report shows that our student contact increased from 148 in 2019-2020 to 382 in 2020-2021. Student contact includes: Counseling appointment, Veterans Specialist appointment, drop-in counseling, and online advising. The significant increase in student contact demonstrates the importance of having adequate staffing to successfully coordinated support services for our veterans and dependents.

The VA today is a huge organization, serving millions of veterans. It offers a variety of benefit programs that include programs for health care, education, disability and educational benefits. Navigating the VA can be complicated. One of the biggest frustrations voiced by veterans is the daunting and unfamiliar bureaucracy of higher education and VA educational benefits. Student veterans are required to complete substantial paperwork in order to receive financial assistance while attending College. Our Veterans Services would be better able to serve veterans if we had the resources to hire more staff members specifically dedicated to veteran services. Limited staffing and complicated VA benefits rules leads to a focus on immediate needs and legal mandates, which leads to an overly strong focus on VA educational benefits compliance. More personnel would allow staff to get to know veterans individually and coordinate support activities with other offices throughout the college.

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**Q12**

Please confirm that you have discussed this faculty position request with the dean or manager and that you understand that deans and managers will be providing feedback to help inform the prioritization process.

**Yes, I have discussed this position request with the Dean or Manager**