

UC San Diego

UC San Diego News Center

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Student Veterans Resource Center. Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

UC San Diego Provides New Tools for Student Veterans to Succeed

UC San Diego is home to approximately 300 student veterans, a population estimated to be higher than any other UC campus. Providing support to student veterans is a proud UC San Diego tradition, and this year the campus is launching new initiatives to provide more tools for veterans to succeed academically.

UC San Diego already offers veterans priority registration and veteran-specific campus orientation as well as academic advising, career counseling, and financial services liaisons to help all military-affiliated students get connected to campus resources while also processing their GI benefits. New tools designed to improve retention and graduation rates for these students, include creating

educational and engagement programs to build bridges between military-affiliated students and non-military affiliated students and implementing programs to enhance military-affiliated students' relationships with faculty outside of the classroom.

“As the number of military-affiliated students increases in higher education, it is critical to ensure that they have access to specialized services that meet their unique needs as learners,” said newly appointed Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Retention and Success Jeffrey Orgera. “These students have an array of skills and life experiences that enhance our campus and local community.”

Orgera leads a team at UC San Diego that provides academic success services to several distinct student populations that includes military-affiliated students, historically underrepresented students, undocumented students, international students and the Chancellor's Associates Scholars. The team also is working in partnership to develop more comprehensive academic support services for all students on campus.

Orgera also plans to use UC San Diego's Student Veterans Resource Center (SVRC), which was established in 2013, as a powerful tool to foster academic success and timely graduation for veterans. Located on the 2nd floor of the Student Center, the SVRC offers all military-affiliated students comprehensive resources and a supportive community to aid their transition from a military environment to campus life. It also provides opportunities for peer-to-peer support, mentoring and social networking.

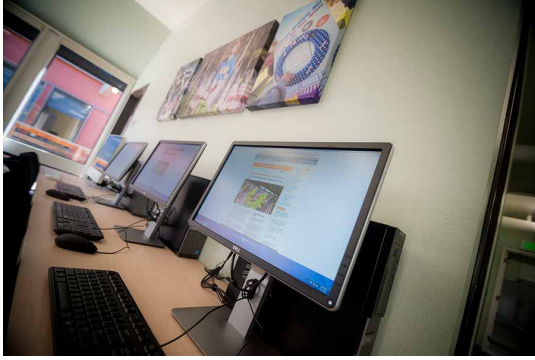
“In the coming year, our goal is to increase the availability of academic success resources offered at the SVRC to include tutoring, test preparation, and time management skills,” added Orgera.

Other goals Orgera outlined include implementing programs to enhance relationships with faculty outside of the classroom, so faculty can embrace and value the unique perspectives, needs, and characteristics of the campus's military-affiliated students.

Most UC veterans who enroll as undergraduates started their academic career at a California Community College. With many student veterans transferring from community colleges, Orgera says the campus supports these students through their adjustment to UC San Diego and informs them of their available resources.



Jeffrey Orgera



“The SVRC works in close partnership with the veterans’ resources and services unit within the Office of Admissions,” Orgera said. He added that it is valuable to have these two offices and the UC San Diego certifying official within the Registrar’s office, working collaboratively to ensure that student veterans have a seamless pathway into UC San Diego and the educational and financial opportunities to help them graduate.

“It’s great to be a military-affiliated student on campus,” said Cynthia Kanoelani Kau’i, a former SVRC peer mentor and daughter of a retired Navy Seal. “You would think that there is a lot to navigate and you’ll end up overwhelmed, but there is an abundance of resources and assistance for student veterans at UC San Diego.” Kanoelani Kau’i is also a member of the Student Veteran Organization, a student-led and student-organized community of veterans, current military service members and military dependents. The organization aims to provide a community of belonging, advocacy and outreach for military affiliated students on campus.

For more information on student veteran resources at UC San Diego, click [here](#).

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