

Mentoring Military Students: Creating a Culture for Academic Success

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Background

- Military students are entering college at increasing rates
- Their unique characteristics and limited experiences navigating academia may contribute to feelings of isolation, a lack of identity on campus, and academic challenges
- One in four students at our university are military affiliated
- Virginia ranks 7th in the nation in military veteran population and the southeast corner, where our institution is located, has a high population density of veterans, 16.3% of the total population

VET-PRN Program

- The demand for registered nurses (RNs) employed in primary care (PC) settings is exponentially increasing
- RNs contribute to increased quality of care especially for patients with complex healthcare needs
- The lack of primary care education in undergraduate programs is a barrier to expanding the role of the RN in the primary care setting

Challenges of Military Students

- Career Switch
- Frequent Relocations
- Work and Family Balance
- Military Cultural Differences
- Multiple Transcripts
- PTSD

VET-PRN Aims



Environmental Support
Social Support

Structural Support
Campus Resources



Interventions

Student Support Initiatives

Faculty Training Initiatives

www.vetprn.org/



VET PRN

- Mess Hall
- Study Hall
- Classroom Study Skills



Results

- 22 students enrolled in our first two cohorts
- 7 graduated in 2021 and 15 are scheduled to graduate in 2022
- Hosted 15 Mess Halls and 3 Study Halls
- Students are actively engaged in SNA leadership roles at both the local and state level
- 13 nursing faculty completed our in-service
- 92% reported increased knowledge of veteran learners, their ability to support them, and available resources
- 68 participants have completed our online training module
- 85% felt the information would be beneficial to their role

Discussion

- This model may contribute to retention of military students transitioning to a nursing career
- Faculty were receptive and engaged in learning how to support military and veteran students
- Program can be adopted and adapted to other nursing education programs

"Thank you to the entire VET-PRN faculty for this opportunity. I am excited to focus my career in the primary care area."

"I didn't know there were so many resources."

Recommendations

- Mentoring model should be adapted and tailored to fit nursing and other academic programs
- Increase distribution and use of www.vetprn.org to educators and preceptors



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