



Tactical Transitions: Examining Military-Affiliate Needs

Appalachian State University



Purpose

To provide a better understanding of student veterans and military-affiliated student needs on Appalachian State University's (ASU) campus by attempting to identify areas of improvement in regards to programming, communication and mentorship.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceived programming needs of the Student Veterans Resource Center as reported by student veterans and other military-affiliated students at ASU?
2. What is the best method of communication to reach student veterans and other military-affiliated students at ASU?
3. What type of mentorship program, if any, do ASU student veterans and other military-affiliated students perceive as beneficial?

Participants

- 302 military-affiliated students
- Identified as active duty, reserve, separated, veteran
- Enrolled at Appalachian State University (ASU)
- Ages 18 to 59 years old

Methods

- A Qualtrics Survey was created with several sections: awareness, satisfaction, mentor program, ASU, student veterans services, communication, and demographic.
- The survey was sent by the researchers over the listserv provided by the coordinator of student veterans services.
- The coordinator of student veterans services mentioned the survey in the newsletter that week.
- The researchers attended the Student Veterans Association meeting to advertise and answer any questions.
- Reminder emails were sent over the listserv each week.
- The survey was open for one month during the fall semester.

Results

- 106 responses with 84 usable responses for a 28% response rate
- Three overarching themes were uncovered

Discussion

Importance of Support Networks

- Self-reported difficulty connecting socially with traditional students
- Perception that traditional students are just "kids"
- Often uncomfortable or unappealing to integrate into the typical student lifestyle because of their classmates though about them
- Social support networks are an important part of transitioning to higher education, but little agreement on how that looks

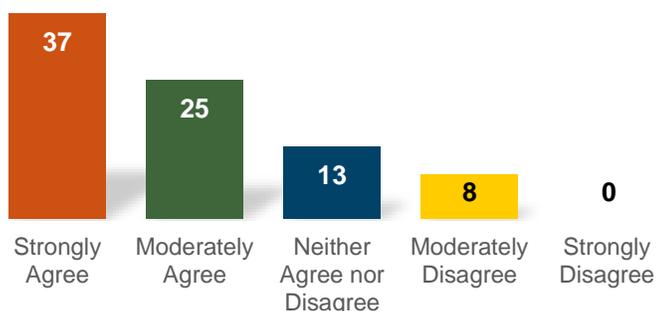
Direct Communication

- E-mail is the most preferred method of communication for academics and Facebook for socializing and being aware of campus events
- Did not want to be contacted via personal email or text messaging
- Rarely use phone conversations

Mentorship Programming

- Beneficial for all or just new/younger service members
- Prefer mentor with a similar major or in the same branch
- No preference on gender for a mentor
- Split between preference on a mentor who has completed at least two semesters or no preference at all

I feel welcomed on ASU's Campus - by other students



Contact Information

Angelina R. Donohue: donohuear@appstate.edu

Kaitlyn R. Thruston: thrustonkr@appstate.edu