

SUNY Cobleskill
Expanded Investment and Performance Fund
White Paper

Title: Veterans Housing and Support Center

Executive Summary: SUNY Cobleskill will create a Veteran's Center in which to provide academic, health, and mental health resources & services for student veterans and their families. The Veteran's Center will be closely linked with the college's Wellness Center, the Applied Psychology program and its interns, the therapeutic riding program at the college Equine Center, and companion dog services through the college's Canine training and management curriculum. The intent of the Center will be to provide on-campus housing and comprehensive support services to Veteran students and their families while creating applied learning opportunities for Cobleskill students from three different academic disciplines. SUNY Cobleskill, already designated a Veteran Friendly campus, expects to create a model Veteran student services program that can be scaled up and replicated by other SUNY colleges.

Activities for this initiative will include:

- Rehabilitation of an off-line campus dormitory to create a Veterans Center on the 1st floor (resource center, individual and family counseling space, Health and Wellness Annex); and family-style suites on the 2nd and 3rd floors. Building modifications will include repositioning walls to accommodate desired layout and making the entire dorm ADA compliant.
- Creation of a new advisement track in Applied Psychology: Veterans Psychology. This track would focus on Veteran/family rehabilitation with a goal to prepare students to work in a supportive community for student veterans and their families. Courses to be developed may include: Addiction & Psychology, Impact of Deployment on Military and Families, Resiliency in Military or at Risk Families, PTSD Treatment: Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches. Existing courses that may be included would be Abnormal Psychology, Group Dynamics, and Health Psychology, and Community Psychology.
- Coordination of all on-campus Veterans services and activities, including equine therapeutic riding and canine companion, and off-campus Veterans service including Wounded Warrior, Adaptive Sports Foundation, Patriot Hills, and the Veterans Administration Hospital in Albany, NY.
- Training students/Veterans to assist veterans and others with PTSD, suicide, and other mental health issues frequently found as a result of deployment or trauma. These students would serve their full time internship experience at the center.

The Veteran's Center concept will positively impact both Veteran students and students enrolled in the three associated disciplines; Applied Psychology, Equine Studies, and Canine Studies.

Access & Diverse Enrollment – A Veteran friendly and Disabled Veteran friendly Center providing housing and comprehensive academic, health and wellness services will increase access for Veteran students and increase the diversity of the Cobleskill campus

Completion & Student Achievement and Retention & Non-traditional students – Supportive family, health and mental services provided by the Center will enable Veteran students to focus on academics, leading to improved rates of retention, student achievement and completion. The focus on non-traditional students also increases the campus diversity.

Success & Applied Learning and Student Supports/Veterans Supports – Students in the equine therapeutic riding program, Applied Psychology program and canine studies program will gain hands-on experience working with student Veterans and their families.

Amount of Funding Requested and Type of Funding

SUNY2020 - Renovation of Porter Hall Dormitory - \$2,400,000

Investment and Performance Fund - \$150,000

Total: \$2,550,000

SUNY2020 grant funding will be used for capital expenditure to renovate the interior space of an existing dorm. There is currently no bond held on the dorm and it is owned by the college.

Investment and Performance Fund will be used for new program development and an initiative that will drive long-term improvement in program delivery.

Matching Funding

Student Veterans of America - \$10,000 – Campus Veteran Resource Center – received in June 2015 to upgrade parts of the center’s structure, furnishings, and decorations and establish additional resources for students.

Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success – US Dept of Education – Office of Post-secondary Education \$326,919 (applied July 2015 – outcome pending)

Veterans Adaptive Sports for Disabled Veterans – Department of Veterans Affairs - \$100,000 – March 2016 application date.

SUNY Cobleskill – The College is providing \$120,000 for modifications to a campus facility that will be used to provide canine companion services.

SUNY Cobleskill – The College is providing \$50,000 for ADA-compliant bathrooms in the equine facility.

Scalability and/or Replicability: SUNY Cobleskill’s Veterans Housing and Support Center is scalable for some services, such as mental health, health and wellness, resources and other supportive services such as therapeutic riding and canine companions. The housing component will be limited by available space in Porter Hall. The model could be replicated, in part, by other SUNY campuses, however, the unique services provided by SUNY Cobleskill (equine therapy and canine companion services) are not available at other SUNY campuses. SUNY Cobleskill would accept other SUNY’s Veteran students for equine therapeutic riding and could contract with other SUNYs to provide canine companion animals, orientation and training.

Attachment – Impact of the Proposal on the Institution and the SUNY System

Metric	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Number of Veterans/Non-traditional students enrolled	92	115	135
Veteran student retention rate	68%	70%	78%
Veteran student completion rate	60%	64%	68%**
Applied Psychology student enrollment	44	52	60
Applied Psychology student retention rate	85%	90%	90%
Applied Psychology student completion rate	N/A*		
Equine assisted therapy student enrollment	25	30	35
Canine training and management student enrollment	12	17	23

*Completion rates are calculated using a 6 year cycle. Applied Psyc has only been a program for 2.5 years, so these numbers are not in existence. In 2.5 years, we have graduated 16 students. 100% of these students have been offered jobs in their field.

**Student Veterans of America reports 51% completion rates for veterans. (Inside higher Ed)

Attachment - Timeline of Activities

Date	Action Item
December 2015	Notification of Award
January 2016 – April 2016	PIs begin development of new advisement track and courses. Building rehabilitation design services sought. Veterans Service coordinator recruitment begins. Hire Fourth Psychology Faculty for New advisement track
January 2016-August 2016	Begin development of courses for Advisement Track
May 2016 – August 2016	Building design services RFQ issued and bids received.
September 2016	Building design contract awarded
April 2017	Building design completed. RFP issued for construction services.
May 2017	Building construction services bids received. Submission of Applied Psych program revision to include Advisement Track to SUNY System Admin
June 2017	Building construction bid awarded.
July 2017	Building rehabilitation begins.
March – July 2018	Hiring of Veteran Coordinator
Summer 2018	Building renovations completed/move-in begins