

The Student Affairs Diversity Council (SADC) strives to cultivate an environment that embraces and promotes the broad scope of diversity within the division.

First Student Shaped Center's Culture of Listening



By Roger Perkins
 Director, Veterans Support Center

Serving as the Director of the Veterans Support Center has brought me in contact with a slice of Veteran culture with interesting and sometimes poignant impact.

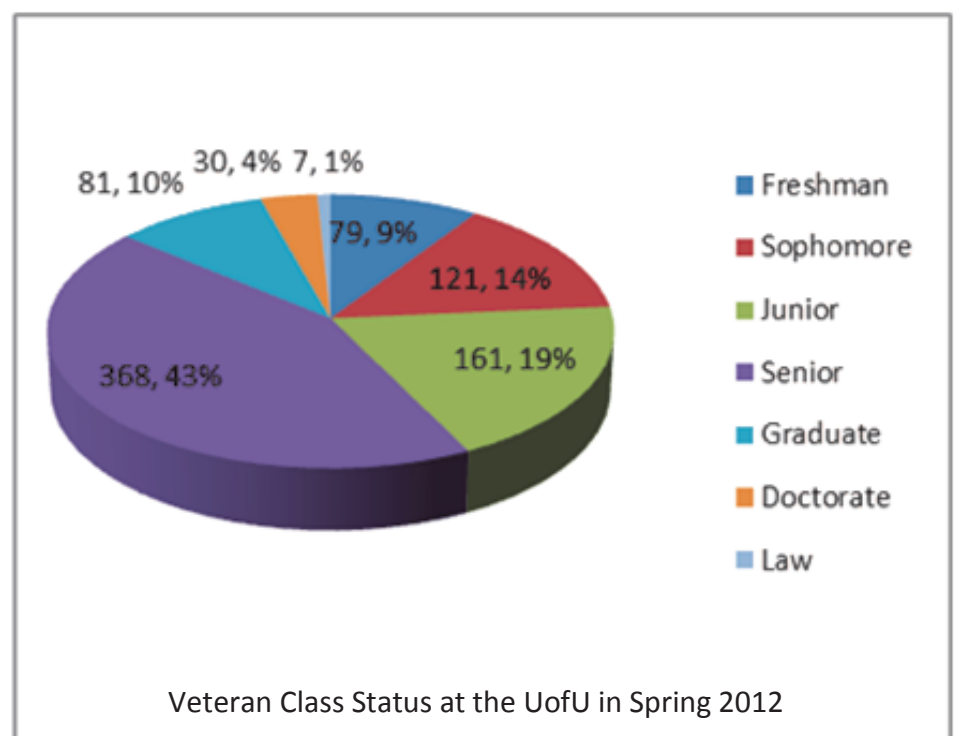
When I first came to the job I was sitting in my office with no phone, no computer, no stapler, no staples, and so on. Into the office walked a young woman who said that she just wanted to talk to another Veteran and they thought of my office, which is good.

The young Veteran and I started talking and it was obvious that she was very high strung and tense. Her gestures were quick and abrupt. Her eyes were shiny, but she wasn't crying. She spoke in an

extremely fast manner, jumping from subject to subject, and it was obvious that this was her regular condition. As we spoke, she said she was suffering from PTSD and was very open with me about that. The depth to which the discussion went caused me some concern so I let her know that I wasn't a licensed counselor or psychiatrist and that I probably wasn't able to do much more for her than listen. She responded by saying "Look. I was a Marine and a damn good one. And I don't want anyone to think I'm a (a crude word for

weakling). But when I say that to other people their eyebrows go up. Yours didn't." Which was true. I understood her to mean she didn't want anyone to think she could not handle her circumstances or take care of herself. This is very much in line with the military ethic of carrying your own weight and, while in the vernacular, her choice of words were clear and specific to her circumstances.

That was an epiphany for me. At that point I understood what a large portion of my job was going





to be. To listen and to understand. Not just from a clinical perspective or by being tolerant of swear words but from an experiential one that is “been there; done that”. Since speaking with her, there have been many student Veterans through the office who just wanted to unload to someone who could understand the experiences in a very personal manner, who would just listen and could understand what was bluster and what was a real issue. My office staff (who are all Veterans for just that reason) understand that, when student Vets are in the office talking, job #1 for

them is to listen. Paperwork can wait. Some want to talk about their experiences, some about school, some just want to reminisce about where they’d been and what they’d done. But all of them are looking for a deeper connection; a common understanding of the circumstances without having to explain how they got there or why. This one experience shaped how I personally and our Center professionally present services and conduct business with student Veteran culture here at the University of Utah.

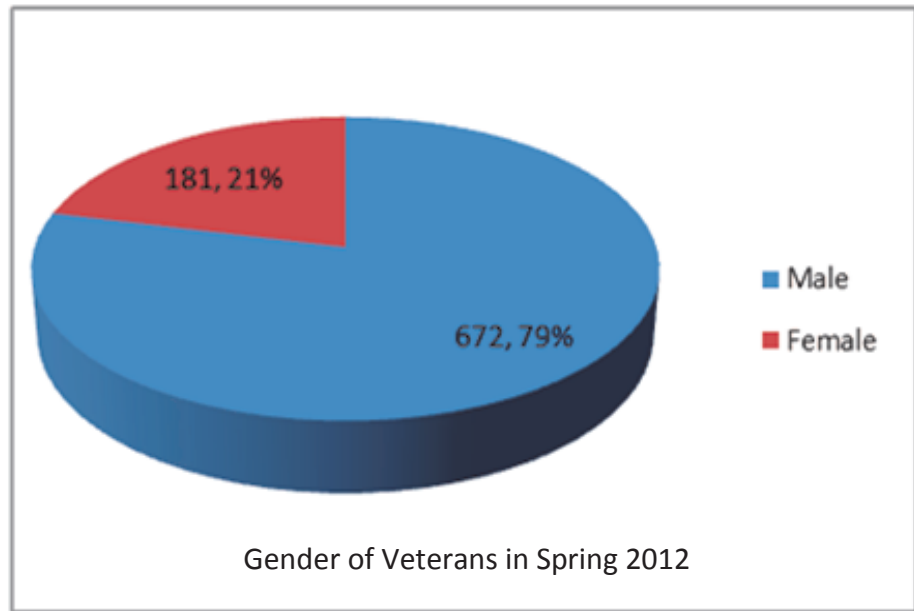
NOVEMBER SEMINAR SERIES

Female Student Veterans: Reintegrating After Service; a Multifaceted Look

Lt Col Chris Gedney
USAF (RET), MBA, MA, MSW

Who is the female student veteran? This talk will address the multitude of issues surrounding today’s female student veterans. Reintegrating back into civilian life has unique challenges for women; transitioning from combat soldier and warrior to mother, wife, daughter, partner, Aunt, Mother. Combine that with the invisible wounds of military sexual trauma (MST) that far too many returning vets have suffered and the integration process becomes that much harder. This discussion will focus on some of the unique issues facing female veterans and offers insight into how best to empower them on to success. The trailer for the movie depicting Military Sexual Trauma, *The Invisible War*, winner of the Sundance Audience Award will also be presented.

Wednesday, November 14
(One week earlier than usual)
12:00 PM—1:30 PM
Pano East, Union



TOP TEN TIPS TO BETTER SERVE STUDENT VETERANS

The University of Utah’s veteran population makes up 3% of our total student population. Of that, 22% are women. Veterans are those people in our society who have stepped up to accept the physical and mental burden of personally protecting the Constitution of the United States and the nation as a whole. Most of them do not go to combat, but all of them accept that possibility when they enlist. When they leave the military and come to school, they bring a wealth of experience covering things like project management, leadership, cross-cultural coordination, and specific professional skills pertaining to their military specialty. As a result, they are dramatically different from the average freshman and

require different management. Here are some things you can do to better understand and serve veterans at the University of Utah.

- 1. Don’t assume they are ‘typical freshmen’ who may lack maturity or the ability to understand how the U works.** Veterans are usually older and are coming out of a professional environment they have been working in for several years.
- 2. Most Veterans are direct in how they speak and act. Understand that being direct is not the same as being aggressive or rude.** It’s merely a way to get to the answer faster.

3. Because they are coming from a professional environment where they had expertise and were encouraged to be innovative they will ask leading questions. **Don't misunderstand this as challenging your authority or being disrespectful.**

4. **Don't assume you understand the military experience.** To most the Global War on Terror is a news article. To student Veterans it was their reality for many years.

5. The military doesn't make policy, they apply it. **Don't assume our student Veterans were involved in decision making on a national level for actions the government has taken.** You will find as many different opinions among Vets as you will the open population.

6. **Understand that there are a multitude of skills the average Veteran brings along when they separate** – leadership (not to be confused with management), project management, time management, analytical skills, judgment, and more. Recognize that many are experienced managers and leaders.

7. **Never – ever – ask a Veteran if they have killed someone.** It's none of your business and it is not a topic of discussion Veterans like. Unfortunately this question comes up more often than it should.

8. **Not all student Veterans carry the burden of PTSD (though all Vets understand that burden).** And those who do are generally dealing with the problem to the point where they are functioning well on campus with the help of their friends and community.

9. **There is spectrum of experience in the military** that encompasses how long someone was in, what they did for a job, where they were assigned, and whether they served during wartime or not and a variety of other personal and professional factors. The experience of someone with 4 years in the military, for example, is vastly different than that of someone with 10 or 20 years. Watching a movie does not capture that experience for the civilian.

10. **Recognize their service and sacrifice if you wish.** A simple "Thank you" goes a long way.

EVENTS



- ◆ Veteran Recognition at Nov 3rd U vs WA football game
- ◆ GI's of Comedy Show
Nov 3 @ 6pm
Guest House
- ◆ "American Indian Health Disparities" lecture featuring Michael E. Bird,
Mon., Nov. 5 @ 7pm
Gould Auditorium
Marriott Library
- ◆ Utah American Indian Film Festival
free screenings @ 7p
Nov. 7, 14, 16, & 28
uen.org/amerindfilm/
- ◆ Veteran Recognition Night
Nov 8 @ 4:30
Union Lounge
- ◆ Panel Discussion: "Korea: The Forgotten War"
Fri., Nov 9 @ 8:45am
Union Theatre
- ◆ Veterans Day Commemoration
Fri., Nov 9 @ 11am
Union Ballroom
- ◆ 57th Annual Veterans Day Concert
Sat., Nov. 10 @ 7pm
Jon M Huntsman Ctr
- ◆ "The Real Thanksgiving Story" Lecture
Wed., Nov. 14 @ 12p
American Indian Resource Center
- ◆ Hunger Banquet
Mon., Nov. 19 @ 6p
Union Salt Air Rm

HUMAN RESOURCES OFFERS "INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE" SERIES

The Human Resources Training and Development team is offering a special 'Inclusion in the Workplace' series for the fall 2012. The series focuses on widening understanding of how we interact and can support individuals within the workplace.

Classes include:

- 'Generations in the Workplace' on Thursday, November 1st
- 'Our Behaviors' on Thursday, November 8th
- 'Safe Zone' on Thursday, December 13th

You can register for these classes and view class descriptions on the HR website at http://training.hr.utah.edu/class_calendar.jsp.



Debra Daniels, Co-chair Women's Resource Center
Kari Ellingson, Co-chair Student Development
Michael Bard, Registrar's Office
Kajsa Berlin-Kaufusi, Center for Learning Abroad
Arlyn Bradshaw, Dean of Students Office
Karen Cone-Uemura, Counseling Center
Branden Dalley, Union Administration
Nelly Divricean, International Center
Kris Fenn, Bennion Center
Eduardo Galindo, ASUU Student
Adrienne Howell, TRiO
Nedra Hotchkins, Graduate Student
Scott Jensen, Housing & Residential Education

Trisha Jensen, Orientation & Leadership Development
Suzanne Jones, Registrar's Office
Carol MacNicholl, Center for Disability Services
Kai Medina-Martinez, LGBT Center
Susan Miller, Campus Recreation
Sana Muller, ASUU
Sam Ortiz, Student
Rachana Patel, Office of Admissions
Cynthia Powell, Student Health Center
Valery Pozo, Career Services
Erica Rojas, Financial Aid & Scholarships
Claudia Snow, Union Administration

For more information and recourses, please visit:
sadc.utah.edu