



Student Affairs Fee Advisory Board

Budget Request Form FY2018

Department should complete one form for each individual request

Department: Veteran Resource & Support Center
Military Admissions Program for Integrative Transitions (MAPIT)

SAFAB Use Only	
YES	NO

Program, Service, or Operation Requested

Military Admissions Wage 50% Staff (12 Month)

General Description:

Recurring funding for the part-time Military Admissions staff will provide the minimum required staff depth to grow an innovative program with unlimited potential to significantly enhance VRSC, Division of Student Affairs, and TAMU Strategic Goals that pertain to student success.

The purpose of MAPIT is to provide personalized services and a uniquely collaborative support network that recognizes and engages student veteran experiences and strengths to ensure the highest graduation rates and the most successful career outcomes. TAMU has two full-time Military Admissions Liaisons and a (one-time funded) part-time employee who are solely dedicated to facilitating admission of military-affiliated students. They also assist students in applying for academic credit for military experience, military withdrawals/readmits, and making connections with PAVE and AVN resources.

Request Type: Full Increase One-Time Partial/Matching

Type of Funds Requested UAF Other

General Questions:

How does this address an important need and positively impact students?

Due to its foundational importance and initial success, the Military Admissions process was recently formalized into the Military Admissions Program for Integrative Transitions (MAPIT) and is now the third VRSC “Core Program” (with the Aggie Veteran Network & PAVE).

Despite the nationwide growth of higher education services and support for military-connected students (specifically veterans) in recent years, a true Military Admissions Program capability exists at only a few institutions in the country. At TAMU, “Military Admissions” has evolved over the past 18 years. It began as an informal process (extra duty) by a single Admissions Processor to facilitate the admission and enrollment for a small number of active duty students into the TAMU ROTC commissioning programs. By 2012, “Military Admissions” became a full time position for this Admissions staff member as she provided services to the

broader, rapidly growing prospective student veteran population. After the Veteran Resource & Support Center (VRSC) was established, a new opportunity was seized by co-locating this Military Admissions staff member in the VRSC. This was the beginning of a very unique Academic and Student Affairs partnership.

In the past three years, the process has been refined and now plays an indispensable role in the success of Aggie student veterans in two ways:

- *Increasing veteran admission acceptance and enrollment rates.*
- *By promoting and connecting new students with essential VRSC transition services and resources before and after their arrival at TAMU.*

The overall impact is best summarized below:

Dr. Dani Molina is Senior Program and Research Manager for Veterans' Programs at the American Council on Education (ACE). In his recent article (ACE Newsletter WINTER 2016 VOL. 1, NO.1), *Service Members and Veterans in Higher Education: The Importance of Admission and Academic Advisers*, he states: "Too few service members and veterans complete a four-year college education...Admissions and academic advisers are key to increasing the number of service members and veterans who access and succeed in higher education. No other professionals have the potential to impact the life-course and social mobility of our nation's military-connected individuals than higher education administrators, especially enrollment and academic advisers. These professionals can have a profound impact on whether service members and veterans enroll in college and complete their education."

What department/Division Strategic Plan item does this support? What is the impact if not funded?

This position directly enhances VRSC Strategic Goal #1: "Develop, Refine, Integrate, and Assess programs and resources to facilitate successful student veteran transitions." As a VRSC Core Program, MAPIT is the student veteran "gateway" to transition support.

This position is also a critical component in meeting VRSC Strategic Goal #3: "Expand and refine the assessment from "application to vocation" for graduate and undergraduate student veterans." This position will directly contribute to the "application phase" assessment effort within the VRSC.

By enhancing the MAPIT Program, this staff position assists the VRSC in supporting five of six DSA Strategic Goals:

- 1 - Enrich the learning experience of students by cultivating an environment of intellectual curiosity
- 2 - Contribute to student success, including retention and timely graduation
- 4 - Provide innovative programs and resources that promote the health, wellness, and safety of students
- 5 - Strategically leverage resources and develop new strategies to ensure our future effectiveness and sustainability
- 6 - Invest in Division staff and enhance the Division's influence in the profession

This position was funded for one year by Dr. Pugh and the staff member was hired in August 2016. If unfunded after the first year, the VRSC will be unable to track longer term data points (persistence, retention, etc.). The ability to assess long term impact will be lost! Additionally, this position already provides significant

enhancements in meeting the increasing prospective student demand. If the position is not funded, MAPIT capabilities will be significantly reduced and customer service will be degraded.

Please provide any data, evidence, input (student faculty, staff, other) you gathered to help you determine the need for additional resources.

Over the past three years, the TAMU Military Admissions capability has expanded to meet the exponential demand growth. In 2013, the single staff member connected with approximately 60 new prospective student veterans each month. As this number increased, a second Admissions staff member was added. They are now in contact with about 200 new prospective student veterans each month (in addition to their pool of an estimated 400-500 existing student veteran contacts).

The Military Admissions Advisors will be subject to the new FLSA rules in December 2016. In August, the VRSC started tracking staff hours to determine FLSA impact. Prior to the part time staff member's arrival, our two Military Admissions Advisors were averaging over 55 hours per week. More recently, their hours are down to just under 50 per week; we must still find a way to reduce MAPIT hours by almost 20 hours per week prior to December.

Student veteran enrollment continues to increase well above the university growth rates. Student veteran enrollment increased over 38% between calendar year 2015 and 2016. Since 2013, the student veteran enrollment growth rate is 84%. This growth rate occurred without any campus recruiting veteran effort at the undergraduate level.

Even though MAPIT is a new program, it received a 2015-2016 Bronze NASPA Excellence Award for the "Off-Campus, Commuter, Non-traditional, Graduate, Professional and Related Category." This recognition and recent initial (limited) data suggests that there is significant potential to enhance student veteran success through future enhancements that formalize, assess, and grow this program.

The most important evidence is the volume of "Thank You" notes that we receive about the impact of MAPIT. Here are two examples:

"One of the most difficult challenges any service member will face is the transition from a military life to the civilian world. [Military Admissions]...provides vital support to veterans and their families as they make this transition. I know that A&M will continue to shine as an example for all schools to follow."

"[Military Admissions] ...was an instrumental part in me being accepted and attending Texas A&M. I owe the privilege to call myself an Officer of Marines and a Fighting Texas Aggie as much to [them] as I do anyone else who helped me on this path."

What actions have you implemented internally to address the identified need?

Over the past year, the VRSC and Admissions staff have focused primarily on meeting increased demand by streamlining procedures and using student workers on a limited basis. The focus on meeting student demand has prevented systematic efforts to assess the process (and other student veteran attributes). Although some data collection on the impact of the Military Admissions process has been collected, it has not been systematic or complete due to a lack of staff resources.

Generally, what assessment tools will you use to evaluate this program/service?

The VRSC has been able to perform limited assessment of overall student veteran application, acceptance, and enrollment rates. This position will provide the ability to more accurately assess these rates. More importantly, the VRSC will now also be able to compare new student veteran success rates between those who use MAPIT and those who don't. The assessment will also be extended to include persistence, retention and ultimately, graduation rates. This staff member will directly contribute to the following program outcomes:

- Assess MAPIT participant retention/persistent rates to establish baseline data in the first year. (Baseline data also includes data on first generation, minorities, GPA, major changes, and educational benefit use). This data will be compared to existing data provided by the SFAID Veteran Service Office which only measures veterans using military educational benefits.
- Identify the difference between MAPIT participant and non-participants in terms of acceptance rates, enrollment rates, GPA, and retention/persistence rates (1st and 2nd year).
- Identification of MAPIT techniques/procedures that produce higher rates of retention and academic success.
- Identify aspects of student veteran "fitness" (Academic, Financial, Social/Health, and Career) indicators that predispose student veterans for success.
- Identify primary causes of MAPIT stop-out and drop-out.
- Use MAPIT techniques and findings to increase awareness of student veteran transition support for TAMU Academic Advisors and increase collaboration between these advisors and the MAPIT/VRSC staff.

How have other sources of funding (fundraising, sponsorship, reserves, etc.) been considered?

Please explain.

The long-term goal is to support several VRSC positions (to include this position) through the recently established VRSC Enrichment Endowment Fund. While recent development efforts have been very successful, this fund is lower on the development priority list than veteran and veteran spouse scholarships. Once the immediate scholarship need is filled, the VRSC development priority will shift to the Enrichment Fund and support positions like this one.

This position was submitted for the DSA College Completion Grant, but it was denied. Dr. Pugh found another source of funding for the initial year with a recommendation to submit the position for SAFAB recurring funding.

The VRSC continues to discuss future funding possibilities with the Office of Admissions. This position may be converted into a full time position in the next few years; if this occurs, the Office of Admissions is assessing their ability to fund the entire position.

You may be asking yourself..."Why is DSA funding an Admissions position?" The answer is straightforward. The impact that MAPIT provides to other VRSC programs is immeasurable. The ability for VRSC programs to engage and impact student veterans is based on the initial relationships that are established through the admissions process. Quite simply, the VRSC success has been built on a Military Admissions foundation.

Funding Description:

	Dollar Amount
Total Estimated Cost	\$13,000.00
<i>Less Estimated Partial/Matching Funds (if applicable)</i>	
TOTAL INCREASE REQUESTED	\$13,000.00

SAFAB Comments/Notes: