

## **Military and Veteran Success Center (MVSC) 2025/2026 Student Fee Application**

**Name of applicant:** Laura Barela, Director of Veteran and Military Success Center (MVSC)

**Amount requested:** MVSC is requesting an increase in funding for the 2025-2026 academic year. MVSC is proposing a fee increase of \$.95 per credit hour. The current rate is .90 cents. The total amount requested is \$1.85 per credit hour.

### **Missions of MVSC**

The mission of the MVSC is to offer a comprehensive higher education experience that meets the needs of our military affiliated students from admission to graduation. The staff of the MVSC have created a “One-Stop Shop” for active-duty service members, veterans, and dependents. This includes academic advising/mentoring, certification of veteran’s education benefits and active-duty tuition assistance (TA) for each military branch, student advocacy and opportunities for student engagement. The MVSC processes billing of veteran’s education benefits and TA and reconciles student accounts. The MVSC provides excellence in customer service. The goal of the MVSC is to provide active-duty military, veterans, and dependent students with the resources and knowledge to be successful at Colorado State University Pueblo and reach their academic goals while creating an environment that allows military students to engage with others. MVSC advocates for the military affiliated population on campus and strives to continually implement and improve processes and procedures that will help students further their education goals. The MVSC serves approximately 400 students. The MVSC supports active-duty service members, veterans and dependents.

This year the MVSC increased the number of activities provided for students in the MVSC and saw an increase in student participation at these events held. These events included:

- Meet the Leadership Team Coffee and Pastry event in September
- Pizza Party in October
- Veteran’s Day Ceremony and reception in November
- Veterans Week Free Lunch at Pack Café in November
- Veteran’s Day ceremony and reception in November
- Hot Coco and Cookies End of Semester Event in December
- Veteran Food Distribution in October

Activities planned for the spring 2025 semester include:

- Valentines Day Party in February
- Spring Break Pizza Party in March
- Graduation Reception for veterans and dependents graduating this academic year in April
- The MVSC continues to provide 5 scholarships each semester, (Fall and Spring)

Similar activities will be planned for the next fiscal year to support our students and allow for campus-wide engagement. Expenses for these activities will be shifted to the MVSC general fund budget.

The MVSC continues to work with our partners at Mt. Carmel Veteran Services, The Center for American Values, the Pueblo Military Veterans Council through the Pueblo Chamber Military Advisory Counsel for continued collaboration.

#### **FY26 Fund Use:**

The use of funds requested by the MVSC will be changing for FY 2026. The use of student fee funds for the MVSC in the 2025-2026 academic year include:

- Salary for full-time position of the MVSC Operations Manager. This position oversees the billing process for students using veteran's education benefits and active-duty tuition assistance. This position ensures compliance with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense. This position also serves as a School Certifying Official for veteran's education benefits and assists in overseeing daily operations and supervision of student employees.
  - i. The Operations Manager provides timely processing of benefits and assists with crediting student accounts.
  - ii. The Operations Manager also assists with answering student inquiries.
  - iii. Having this position allows for more time to be spent by other staff in the office on education/training across campus regarding veteran's services and allows for collaboration with departments on campus.
- Salary for full-time position of the Academic Success Coordinator. This position is critical in the ability for the MVSC to service the needs of military students. This position provides academic advising. The coordinator not only assists military students with academic advising, but it also supports general advising efforts at key enrollment events and attends University outreach activities at Pueblo

Community College and Ft. Carson. This position is the lead school certifying official for the department. This position was previously funded through the Mi Gente grant, which is set to expire in September. Without this position the MVSC cannot continue all the services we offer. Cutting any of the services provided by the MVSC will have an impact on military students and the general campus community.

- The MVSC provides support to staff at the CSU Pueblo Ft. Carson Office. All Active-duty tuition assistance billing is completed by the MVSC.
- In the 2025/2026 academic year the MVSC will continue its partnerships with community organizations as well as with other campus departments including Veterans Upward Bound Program (VUB). This program assists veterans who are transitioning into college by providing preparatory courses and study skills needed to be successful. The MVSC continues to increase student engagement of veterans on campus.
- The MVSC has seen an increase in student traffic in the office. Students have been utilizing the veterans lounge and holding study groups throughout the semester. We are providing an environment where students feel welcome and enjoy socializing with other students. There has been an increase in usage of the veteran's lounge by non-military students. This includes students in nursing, and in the cybersecurity club.
- The success of the Office of Financial Management and MVSC collaboration is measured by the reconciliation and balancing of MVSC student accounts each semester and by meeting VA and DOD mandates. We continue to improve our processes in this area. We recently were audited by both the Department of Veteran Affairs and the Department of Defense. Both audits were successful.

## Proposed Budget for MVSC

The proposed budget for the MVSC Students Fees will be used to cover salary and fringe costs for the Operations Manager position and for the Academic Success Coordinator. Costs related to student engagement, retention and recruitment have been moved to the university general fund account for the MVSC. The proposed budget for MVSC Student Fee for the 2025/2026 academic year is \$135,050. MVSC is asking to retain carry-forward funds.

Currently MVSC will have carry forward approximately \$8,979.00 from the 2024/2025 budget. We would like to request that the MVSC be allowed to retain the carry-forward funds. The funds will be used to offset the salary for the Operations Manager Position and the Academic Success Coordinator in the event that student fees are lower than expected. The table below provides a breakdown of the proposed budget.

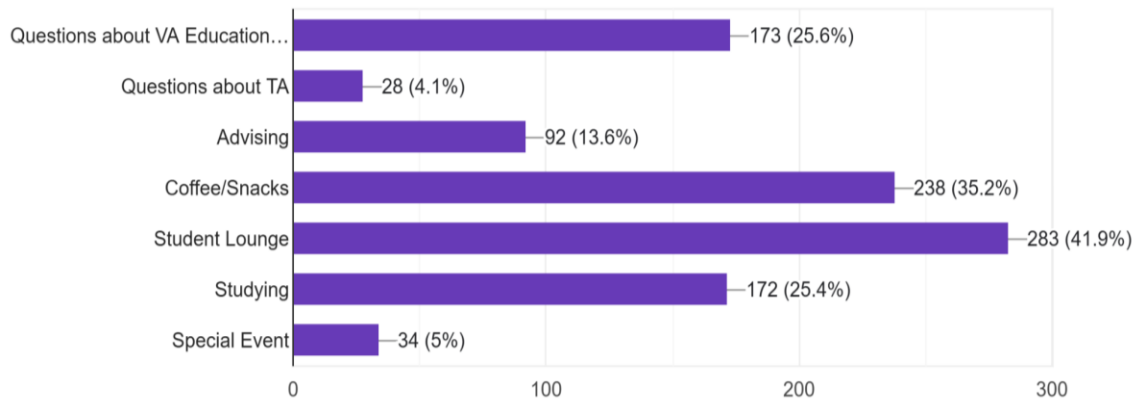
### **MVSC 2026 Proposed Budget**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Budget</b>
2026	<b>Revenue</b>	
	Carry-Forward	\$8,979.00
	Student Fee at \$1.85 per hour for 73,000 hours	\$135,050.00
	<b>Revenue Total</b>	<b>\$144,029.00</b>
	<b>Expenses</b>	
2026	Operations Manager salary, fringe, and expected merit raise	67,825.50
	Academic Success Coordinator salary, fringe, and expected merit raise	67,825.50
	<b>Expense Total</b>	<b>\$135,651.00</b>
	<b>End of Year Balance</b>	<b>\$8,378.00</b>

## MVSC Activity Stats

Reason for Your Visit

676 responses



## Fall Events

Veterans Day Ceremony: Nov 11th

- Approximately 85 people

Veterans Day Reception: Nov. 11th

- Approximately 90 people

Veterans Free Lunch Voucher: Nov 13th

- 70 people

MVSC Wing/Chips Party: Nov. 14th

- 50 people

Veterans Week Raffle: Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>-Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>

- 43 people

Photo Board:

- 10 people

MVSC Q&A and Welcome Back Breakfast: Sept. 4th

- 32 people

Annual Veteran Food Distribution Event: Oct 26th

- 900 people served and 68 volunteers

Halloween/Midterm Celebration: Oct. 15th

- 28 people

MVSC Cookies and Crafts Event: Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> - Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>

- 35 people