



VA Central California & Fresno State –University 8

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"The class has been a very big eye opener for me, to actually see what VA benefits there are out there aside from the hospital" – University 8 Veteran Student

Overview of University 8

- University 8-03 is a 50-min., 1-unit course that meets once a week. The course is designed to give meaningful and useful information to Veteran students about their non-cognitive learning and study strategies to help promote student responsibility for individual performance.

Reason for Action

- Veterans and Civilians may not be aware of the unique challenges that separating from military service and returning to civilian life can present.
- Veterans may find difficulty:
 - Reconnecting with family and re-establishing a role in the family.
 - Joining or creating a community (College, Work, Family)
 - Preparing to enter the college or work force and adjusting to a different pace of life and work.
 - Adjusting to providing basic necessities (e.g., food, clothing, housing).
 - Managing Stress and focusing on the task at hand
 - Establishing services. (VBA, VHA, NCA,)

Current State

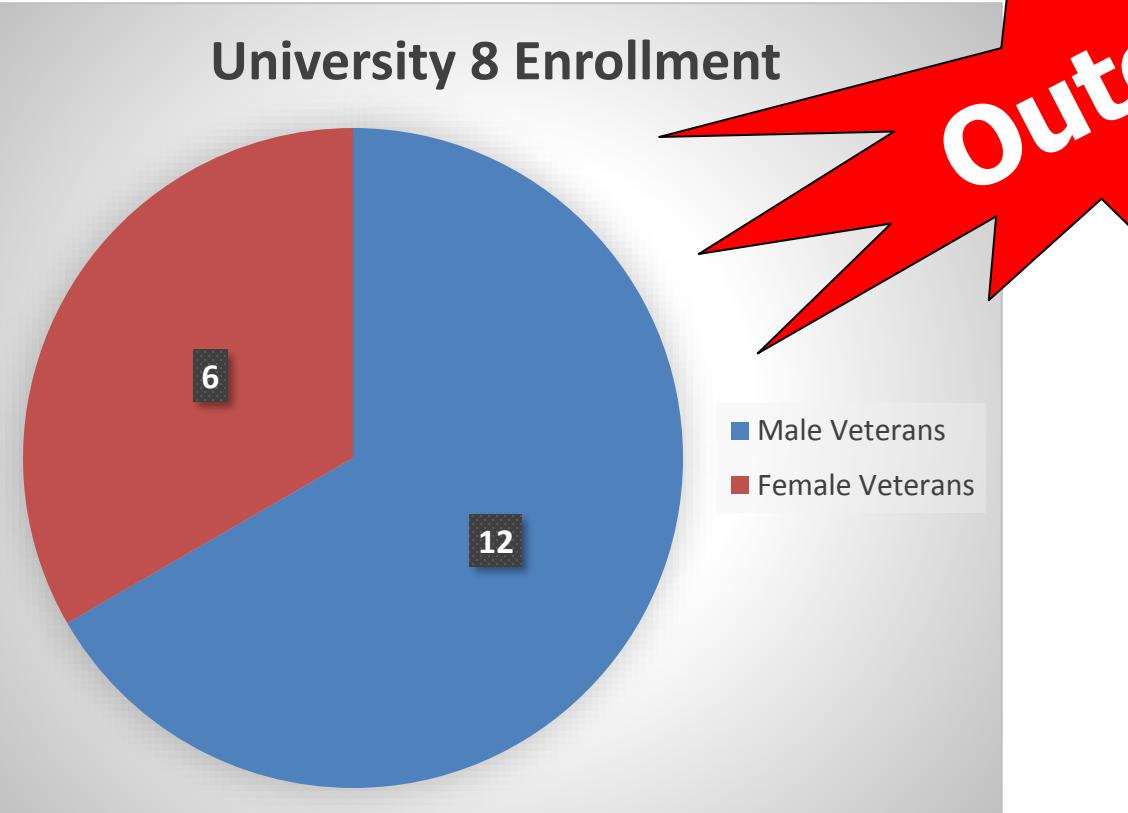
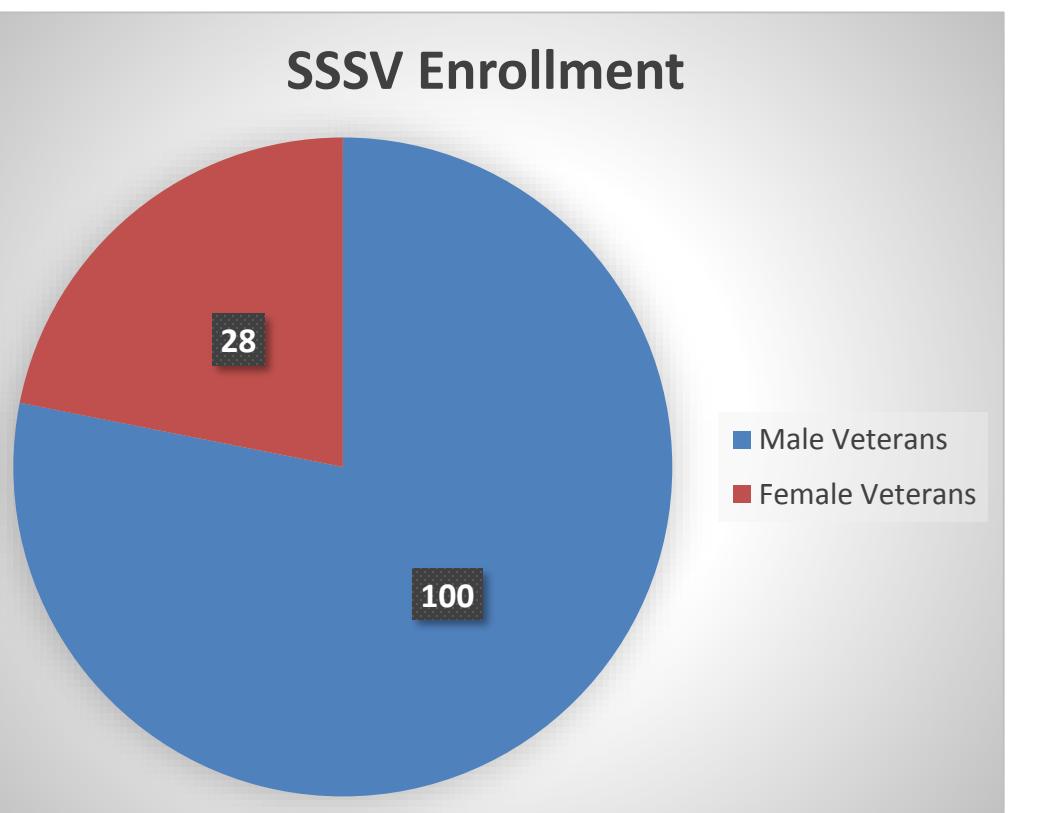
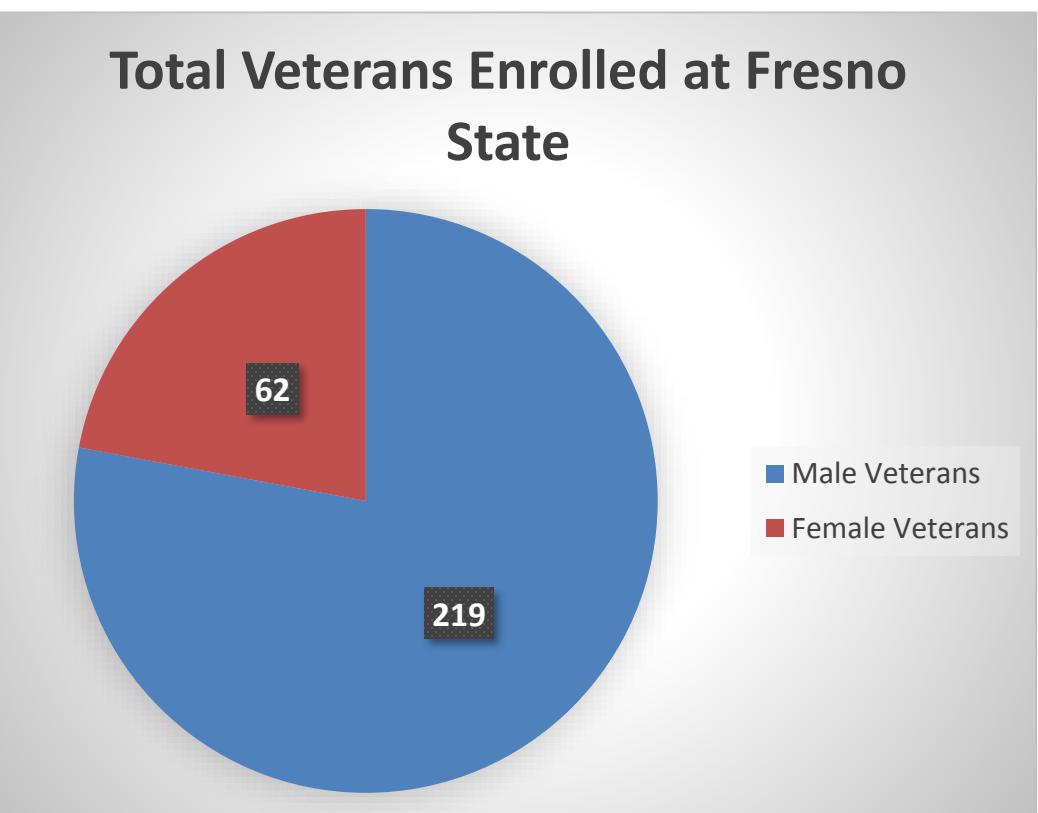
- Fall 2017, there are a total of 281 undergraduate Veterans enrolled at Fresno State receiving VA benefits and services.
- These Veterans traditionally have transferred from a community college and have already been out of the service ~2-3 years.
- Many Veterans are not enrolled in VHA healthcare and/or have not filed a service connected claim.
- The Veterans enrolled in the SSSV University 8 course focus on improving non-cognitive skills to improve their success at University.
- 45% of all Undergrad Veterans enrolled at Fresno State are also enrolled in Student Support Services Veterans (SSSV)
- 15% of Veteran students enrolled in SSSV are also enrolled in University 8.

Target State

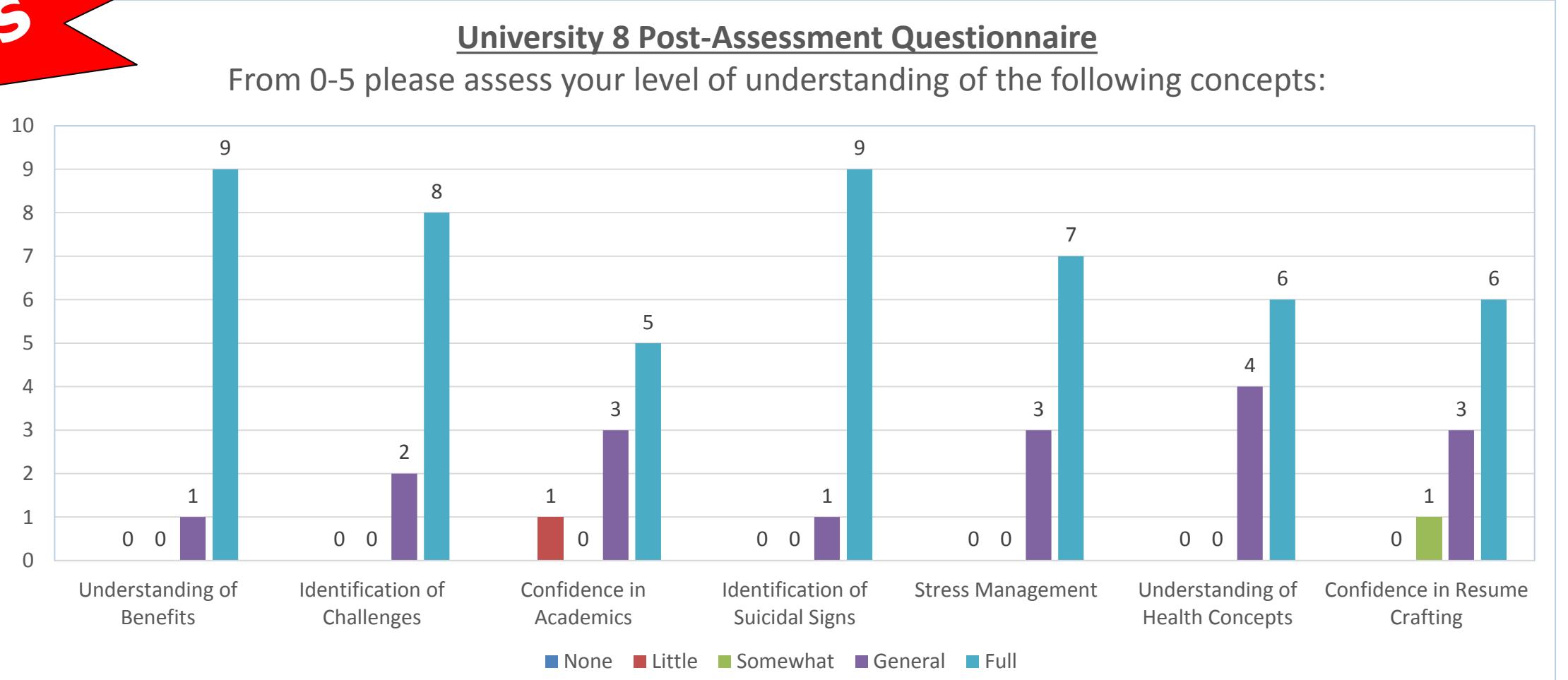
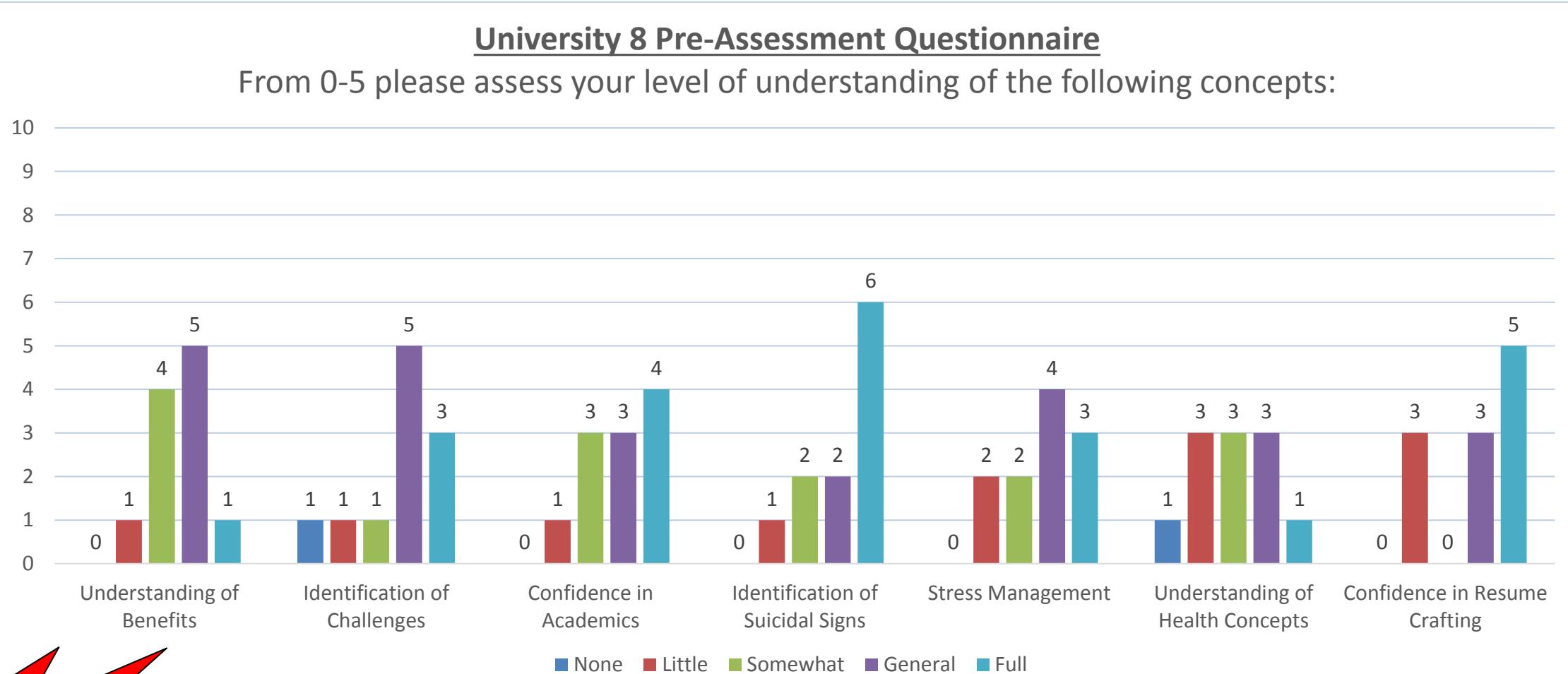
- Fiscal years 2017-2018: 100% of Veterans enrolled in the University 8 class will have a full understanding of various stress management techniques, suicide prevention strategies, non-cognitive study skills and Veteran transition and care management support to help Veteran students remain in school and reach the goal of graduation.
- Fiscal years 2018-Beyond: Provide a 3 unit transition course at Fresno State as well as all Central Valley Community Colleges available to any Veteran who would like to enroll.

Gap Analysis

- Not all Veterans enrolled at Fresno State are eligible for the University 8 class. Only those that are currently enrolled in the TRiO SSSV program are eligible. SSSV accounts for 45% of all Veterans enrolled at Fresno State.
- Ideally, all Veteran Students enrolled at Fresno State should have access to Veterans specific transition education that prepares the returning service member with non-cognitive skills training to be successful in school.



Outcomes



University 8 Course Objectives

- Enroll eligible Veterans for healthcare and services and provide education on filing a service connected claim, utilizing healthcare benefits and services, overall benefits and services (GI Bill, Home Loan, etc.) information and National Cemetery Administration information.
- Provide education and resources on Veterans transition and care management. Specifically, transitioning from active duty to college life.
- Provide three sessions on suicide prevention including safety planning; one at the beginning of the semester, the middle and the end.
- Provide instruction from VA subject matter experts to improve the health and well-being of Student Veterans. Including:

Stress Management: Mindfulness, Tai Chi, Yoga
Health Promotion & Disease Prevention
Effective Journaling, Time Management and Study Habits
Veterans Transition classes to family, work and school
Resume Builders Workshop
Service Animal Presentation
Suicide Prevention and Safety Planning

- "At first I felt that I did not need this course, but throughout the semester I have learned so much about myself on how to manage stress and how to manage my time better." – University 8 Student Veteran
- "Absolutely loved the course. I believe it would be a huge help for other vets like myself if University 8 is extended to vets in the community colleges such as FCC and Clovis. This way more vets will be better prepared before they come to University." – University 8 Student Veteran
- "The University 8 class was very informational. I received so much from it. The most thing I enjoyed or like was the Tai Chi. It was very relaxing and my first time participating. I would definitely recommend this class to other veterans." University 8 Student Veteran
- One Student Veteran enrolled in the class was connected with the Administrative Officer for EMS and received a job interview at VA Central California within a week.
- As a result of University 8, VA has been invited to the Veterans Summit in Pomona, CA in April 2018 to discuss the course and best practices.