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Introduction

The creation of the WOU Veterans Resource Center (VRC) began in 2012 through the initiative of Professor William “Bud” Brown, a Professor in the Department of Criminal Justice. Bud Brown was a veteran of the Vietnam War and a strong advocate for veterans and social justice in his professional career and at WOU. At that time, Criminal Justice was part of the Social Science Division. Bud Brown passed away in 2022. In the Spring of 2023, the chair of the Social Science Division, Professor Mary Pettenger (Political Science), approached the faculty in the History Department about creating a history of the VRC. One of the few people still on campus who knew its history was Professor Stephen Scheck (Biology). Stephen Scheck had been the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the time of the center’s creation and Bud Brown had persuaded him of the necessity of having such a center to support veterans on campus. Since I was scheduled to teach Introduction to Historical Research (HST 301) in Fall 2023, I took on this project with the goal of having students in the class conduct an oral history interview of Professor Scheck about the history of the VRC. I was scheduled to teach Oral History (HST 408) in the following term, so between the two classes, the plan was to conduct several oral history interviews (including transcriptions of the interviews) and to prepare a public display of the VRC’s history for the campus. Due to low enrollments, the Oral History class was cancelled, so the additional work on the project was delayed until HST 408 was offered again in Winter 2025.

The students in the Fall 2023 HST 301 course established the foundation of this project by conducting oral history interviews. The class was divided into three groups and each group interviewed a different person on campus connected to the VRC’s history. In addition to Stephen

Scheck, one group interviewed Logan Doerfler, the current Director of the VRC and another group interviewed Dio Watson, a work study student at the VRC. Both Logan Doerfler and Dio Watson were veterans who had received support from the VRC when first coming to WOU as students. After conducting the oral history interviews, the HST 301 students prepared written transcriptions of the interviews. During his interview, Professor Scheck provided the students with additional documentation related to the history of the VRC, including email exchanges that he had had with Bud Brown, and documentation related to both the internal and external review process of creating the VRC, including a letter of endorsement from an officer in the military.

In Winter 2025, the eleven students enrolled in the HST 408 class reviewed the interview transcripts and documentation that had been collected the previous year and identified several distinct themes related to the VRC's history. Each student selected one theme to focus on and developed a brief written analysis about it using the various primary sources. Some students were able to locate additional primary source material related to the VRC's history. Through in-class peer-review and editing sessions, the students fine-tuned their written analysis. While a public display has not yet been created, the goal of this project has evolved into creating this collection on the history of the VRC that will be available both as a hard copy at the VRC and digitally through Hamersly Library's Digital Collection (Omeka).

This history includes the thematic analysis prepared by the HST 408 students, the oral history transcripts prepared by the HST 301 students, the emails and documentation provided by Professor Scheck, and other documents that have surfaced through this project. As additional interviews are conducted and documentation is found, they will be added to this history.

Thank you to Stephen Scheck, Logan Doerfler and Dio Watson for taking time out of their schedules to be interviewed and to make this history possible. Thank you also to all of the students in HST 301 and HST 408 for their good work and interest in this project. On the last day of the term, the students in HST 408 made a class visit to the VRC. The hour that we spent there confirmed everything that we had learned beforehand about the important contribution that this center makes to veterans and their dependents at WOU.

David Doellinger
Department of History
Spring 2025

HST 301 students who contributed to this research project in Fall 2023:

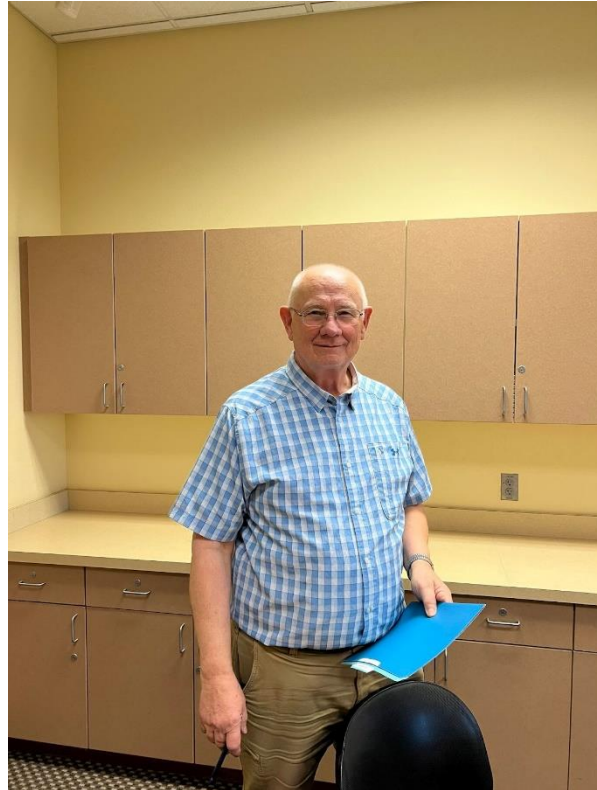
Katie Altheide	Isaac Mayhugh
Jillian Barnhurst	Stephanie McKenzie
Jandika Borden	Ellie Osborn
Juno Debry	Grace Smith
Alex Fawcett	Hallie Tasker
Gabe Grecny	Carson Yon
Ben Loverin	

HST 408 students who contributed to this research project in Winter 2025:

Jackson Albrecht	Hayden Grow
Hayden Bence	Tyler James
Jandika Borden	Ben Loverin
Emma Cane	Jakob Ritter
Jeremy Dixon	Zephen Wilkinson
Billy France-Bagwell	

Prof. Stephen Scheck

Oral History Interview with Stephen Scheck
for Prof. David Doellinger's HST 301 Introduction to Historical Research
November 3, 2023



Interviewers: Hallie Tasker, Isaac Mayhugh , Jandika Borden, Alex Fawcett, Juno Debry
Transcription/Editing: Hallie Tasker, Isaac Mayhugh , Jandika Borden, Alex Fawcett, Juno
Debry, Katie Altheide

SS: Stephen Scheck
HT: Hallie Tasker
IM: Isaac Mayhugh
JB: Jandika Borden
AF: Alex Fawcett
JD: Juno Debry

HT: Hi, today is November 3rd of 2023. We are here interviewing Prof. Scheck – do you prefer
doctor or professor?

SS: Either way, as long as it isn't "mister" because, very polite people with Smokey the Bear hats talk through my driver window and call me "Mr. Scheck," so it got bad...

HT: We are here with Prof. Scheck, I am Hallie.

AF: I am Alex.

IM: I am Isaac.

JB: I am Jandi.

JD: I am Juno.

HT: And how about we start off with Isaac.

IM: Hi, Prof. Scheck, would you please introduce yourself and describe your time at Western [Oregon University].

SS: So, I am currently a Professor of Biology, but I came up to Western Oregon University in January of 2006 to be Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. So, I spent practically a quarter century at Los Angeles universities and then I came here to do administrative work. And so I spent a number of years as Dean – I think seven years. And then I spent another five years as the Provost, Vice-President for Academic Affairs here. And then in 2000 – whatever, about six years ago is subtracted from now, I returned – I left the Provost's office and turned back to the faculty to be in the Biology Department. Which is when I started teaching here for the very first time. I offered an occasional seminar class when I was a Dean, but my real background is as a Biologist, and – but after about 12 years of being an administrator, it's more fun to be a faculty member.

However, the reason you got me in the room here is because the whole Veteran Center and Bud Brown all comes out of my Dean years and several years while I was Provost, from that perspective.

JD: That is a good segue into our next question – which is can you tell us about your work with Bud Brown?

SS: Okay, it all started – and I collected [refers to folder with printed emails between Bud Brown and Prof. Scheck] – and I got some more emails. I had to be cautious about them because they sometimes have student confidential information and the like. But I collected a few samples of stuff that I will leave with you, that will show how – the kind of the personality that Bud Brown was. His real name was William (but he preferred to be called Bud) and I met him – he was in the Sociology department and I was Dean. And ironically the very first email I ever saw of his was a very negative one because I came up here – when I first started here the faculty were ready to go out on strike. So, my first month was just planning for what do we do if all the faculty go on strike, and so I saw some emails from Bud Brown to all the union members and the like. But when we finally met each other, I was very fascinated by his history of how he became a professor.

And I can't recall what he did before he was a professor or when into the criminal justice area because he was in the Criminal Justice Department even his Ph.D. I believe was in Sociology. And – but part of the way he got hooked up with all this veteran aspect was that he spent two tours in Vietnam, as a 2nd Lieutenant out of R.O.T.C. [Reserve Officer Training Corps] or something like that. And he admitted at the time he went over there – he said try – to figure this logic out because his older brother was killed in Vietnam. Either older or younger, but a brother was killed, and he felt, “I need to go there and replace him.” And then he did two tours and that's where he became very disenfranchised with what you may have heard in the literature as the military industrial complex and the militarization and then he had some psychology terms of describing total military immersion of what occurs in bootcamp. Take a young, 18-year-old male or female, put them through bootcamp to turn them into organic robots because for safety

in military efficiencies soldiers, sailors everybody needs to just simply not ask why, but just salute and say “yes sir.”

And so, what he had was a personal campaign about how do you take individuals that went through that system – and I don’t know if there are any veterans in the room and so you know more about this than I do. I got all this from Bud. But he wanted to help veterans that got out of the service to get back into college and get on with personal life. And that’s how he first approached. He approached me saying, “Western is the perfect kind of campus for veterans to come to and is the perfect kind of faculty we have because we like to claim we are high touch, high engagement type of faculty and that we can address more of the personal needs that a veteran may have if they come back with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, come back with whatever the issues are.” And so, he proposed – because he and another gentleman (that I could dig in the records and find his name) but they specialized in being social psychology-type professionals at very serious criminal trials for veterans – Assault, murder, rape, all kinds of terrible events of how they’re linked to post traumatic reaction and the like. He was all over the country as a trial professional witness and so he wanted to take a lot of what he had gleaned and all of that work and put it into coursework here.

And so the very first approach that we took when I was Dean with veterans was to start small and that was offer a seminar course solely for veterans. And it had a title something like Reintegration, meaning reintegration into civilian society after you've been in military society, very different societies. And so he taught the first number of those offerings and it dealt with a lot of what we would say today would be done, what is done in the vet center, but would also be done with VA counseling and all of this, “How do I get back?” And Bud would talk a lot also about some of these veterans coming back (and you may have some in your classes). Well, they went into the service and got out after two, four, six, eight, ten years, and they're coming back here. And you can imagine if you've been somewhere around the world in this military environment that coming back and sitting in a classroom and being as excited or upset about what happened at the party Friday night just doesn't jive.

And so Bud campaigned for us to provide a safe space for veterans where they could hang out with their own kind. And so it started with this seminar Reintegration and then that even grew (and we had to scrounge up budget dollars and everything) and that really grew into – at first it was for veterans only and they had to provide their discharge papers to be able to enroll.

And it would count as an upper-division elective and so on and degree programs. Then he was being approached by family members of veterans of “I want to understand why my husband, why my wife, why my son, why my boyfriend, whatever, is the way they are. And I think if I take a course like this...” And Bud polled all the veterans that were in a course, “Would they be upset if family members joined?” and they said they wouldn't be. And so then that seminar was opened up to family members of veterans and they had to come in and get “By an Approval of Bud Brown” to enroll.

And so we offered those seminars every term for a number of years, but Bud just incessantly campaigned for getting a veteran center. And saying “Even with this, where do they go when they are out of this class?” And it's best if they have peer mentors, just as we know another M.S.S.P. [Multicultural Student Services and Programs] and S.E.P. [Student Enrichment Program], and Black Student Union, and the like, that if you feel like I've got an identity that I don't recognize around me, where I go find others that have got the same shared experience?

And so we were looking around – and the funny thing is Bud was saying, campaigning that, “Okay the veterans will be happier – frankly, they'd be happier if we got a big wall tent and put it way up on the other side of the practice fields out there where they play softball and baseball way away from campus.” And well, that one didn't get to work, but he said they could be off on their own because, for example, Oregon State, I don't know what they're doing now, but at the time they had a Quonset Hut that looked like it was just in some kind of agricultural zone that was the vet center for them.

Well that didn't work, but we did find space in the University Center because we were playing politics and indeed back then the preference or the belief that it was important to give veterans ideal space, wherever that is, just didn't leap high enough on a pecking order here as for

other campus services. But there was the place where it is now – the Veteran Center is now that was – I don't know what used to be in that place you know 15 years ago, but it was mothballed and I was able to tell Bud, “Okay I scrounged this up.” The Vice President for Student Affairs at the time, the gentleman's name was Gary Dukes, was willing and Tina Fuchs, as Dean of Students, they were willing to say, “You can have that space” and I think the space might have belonged to A.S.W.O.U. [Associated Students of Western Oregon University] too, so whoever owned the space was willing to let us try a vet center there.

But there was no funding for it so we scrounged up used furniture, totally voluntarily staffed with veterans that felt a commitment to their fellow vets, and were running these seminar – the seminar course each term. And then we were able to wrangle noticing that there were a fair number of veterans who were pursuing graduate degrees. And so maybe we could get a Graduate Teaching Assistantship stipend to cover something for that veteran to run the vet center and I saw some email exchanges in the end because I had forgotten about that. That is indeed what we did. We were able to shoehorn in and scrape out, when I was Provost at this time – I didn't have enough power when I was Dean. All I got was, here's the space, they let us teach the seminar, and that's it. But when I was Provost, then I had a little more control over some budget, and noticed how certain programs were using the Graduate Assistantships and (my personal judgment) I thought I had a more important way to use one.

So I clawed it out for a year assistantship and that's how the first Director of the Veteran Center came about (and this is like in 2015 or something like that). And so it was a graduate student on a TA-ship [Teachers Assistant], and then it just simply gained momentum of veterans supporting veterans and they got – never really, we were never able to get the external funding that I thought we could if we mounted a major campaign. And part of my opinion was that center just wasn't a prestige enough operation for the university – to say “We're gonna devote our energies to doing that.” And if you look at what the demands for a university are, it's always gonna be a judgment call.

But, but a very seminal event that occurred in getting the permission to run this center and that Bud Brown and Steve Scheck weren't these two crazy guys that wanted to do this with

veterans, was at the time, in my first couple years as Provost, Vice-President, the president of the university was a gentleman named Mark Weiss.

President Weiss. And he's a former executive from Siemens Energy Corporation and came here, and was kinda an Interim President for a while. But Bud organized a field trip, so we took a field trip over to the National Guard Facility in Salem. Went to a conference room and so there was President Weiss, myself, Bud and one other faculty member – I can't remember who that was – and then a whole bunch of Army brass, of National Guard, including a Brigadier-General. And I remember one of the – there was an Air Force guy there too cause I remember he had the flight jacket on with the lamb skin or lamb fur. But Bud started talking about what we're doing and every one of those military guys was so incredibly excited and supportive and said, "This is exactly what we need. We need this kind of a center." And then of course, "Unfortunately our budget can't fund it, but if you can we are a hundred percent behind you." And it kinda made an impression on President Weiss, to see all this Brass saying what this crazy Bud Brown was trying to do is exactly what he should do, and that the University was a great place for veterans to come to school at. And so with that we finally got the footprint and a little bit of office operating budget, and then since then over the years, I believe the budget has increased but it still is heavily run with volunteer help. I believe. Logan can fill you in more, with how the current operation is. But, but there is, if one were to look through the records at the center, it's typically a – in the past there was a grad student, grad student, grad student. Then it became a professional person that might actually be going to grad school, but was on the official payroll which is what it is now.

JB: Nice.

SS: I'm usually long-winded, [Laughter] so, if you need to go back and tease out some stuff be my guest.

HT: It's great, it's all good. Yeah, that was awesome, I have, my question is next. I'm actually gonna tweak it a little bit because you actually answered some stuff and I was just wondering,

what was the process of creation for the Veterans Center. Like for you, like what drew you to support this?

SS: Yeah, truthfully it was the personal persuasion of Bud Brown. I mean I philosophically understood veterans, you know. I was at the age that I missed the Vietnam War because I was in college. And I stayed in college to avoid the Vietnam War, and then when I was between a Bachelors and a Graduate degree, I was in – you may have heard from history classes – there was a lottery for the draft, using ping pong balls and my draft number, was like, number 287. And so even when I graduated from college, President Nixon was winding down and leaving Vietnam, that people with my draft number never even got called up to go get a physical. I had a bunch of college mates that had a lower draft numbers that year but there is that draft, and so I never served in the military. I considered doing R.O.T.C. one time to pay for college and then decided not to. But all my uncles had been in the military, my dad had been in the military so there's – and as a little kid, you played, playing army and the like. But what I didn't understand about the military – because it's interesting – Dr. Brown wanted to have nothing to do with R.O.T.C. here on campus. He really would have preferred that ROTC didn't exist, because his two tours of Vietnam and seeing the damage that this does, it, you know, being in the military it can be very potentially, harmful. It's just what it is. And so he just philosophically – he didn't like it and he was this strongest anti-gun person I have ever known. And thought that guns shouldn't exist in civilian society because they're killing machines and if you go through what he did and like so many Vietnam vets, came back after the war, where literally they were being spat on, and all kinds of stuff. It wasn't those that came back after 9/11. And, and so he had a real cause and hence – as was his involvement in being this professional witness on post-traumatic criminality and the like.

And he's published some papers in those areas so if you dig in some lit search on him you'll find some things in area of post-veteran criminal justice system and so on. But he was very persuasive and then – he was very good at explaining, “Steve this is why we need a center, and we can bring these students that can do very well and if we got the reputation of knowing we have a center like this and services that is going to attract more veterans to come.”

The State of Oregon – he was explaining to me – that it’s unique and it is in that we have no official military base in the state of Oregon. You know, there’s an Airforce base in Tacoma. There’s bases in California. But there is no Army or Airforce or Navy base in the State of Oregon. All that’s here is the National Guard and then the V.A. [Veterans Affairs]. He was saying if you’re in an area where you don’t have these bases. Military families can feel even more alone because there isn’t a bigger population to have social connections with and so on.

So, he just explains, “Let me do a seminar.” And I said, “That sounds great.” Of course, after I committed to that – “That sounds great,” he then said, “Oh by the way we’d need funding for that.” [Laughter] So now we have to go beg for that. But it was his personal persuasion and his personal commitment to helping others.

AF: So, what kind of impact have you seen the Veterans Center do for the people who go through the program?

SS: Well, you know one thing that – while a lot of people notice and it’s not the most important thing but – we’ve got Veteran’s Day coming up and the Vets center will do some programming and frequently there’s a dinner and so on. Then they’ll have some other type of functions. But I think the important is that if you walk by the Veterans Center today there’s almost universally someone in there. And frequently when I walk by (and I don’t walk by all that often so it’s kind of random sampling) there’s more than one person in there and it’s not just staff. But in the very early days it was kind of a one person is the chief cook and bottle washer and how much of the bandwidth can they give.

The great thing about the center is that it is ensconced. It is here to stay and I believe it’s got its own line budget now, and I believe it’s in Student Affairs and not in Academic Affairs. The seminar class has not been taught for a long time. Part of that is – as you know Professor Brown passed away a year or two ago but he had retired before that and he said it was because of complications from Agent Orange. He had developed severe tremors and the like. Cause he was around Agent Orange in Vietnam. But he was delighted to see the center be something that we

didn't have to keep campaigning for and so am I. That's what I'm excited about it's not just a flash in the pan and depends on one individual to be sure it has an ongoing life.

AF: From what Bud Brown originally envisioned for the Veterans Center, do you think what it is now has met or exceeded what he wanted?

SS: Yeah, I think it's done exactly what he wanted. I think what he would've enjoyed having would have been a budget for the center to do more types of educational programming. You know to replace that seminar and be able to run workshops. And in all honesty, I don't know what the center is doing now. I've talked with current director Logan a number of times and there's always nice men and women in there and so on. I know that they've – over the years for certain veterans that center has been very important because I would always see them in there when I walk by, and so I know that was a home away from home.

But I do believe that knowing how important Brown felt that the general public understand what returning veterans are maybe going through. They're not all going through it but some may. And what I didn't understand either was that some veterans that were nowhere close to a theater of war can also have post-traumatic stress just from the military environment they were in. And the seminar courses they had talked about they were a combination of networking for the veterans, group therapy for the veterans and then bringing in guest speakers to talk about things – all types of functions that the veterans center is doing now. Because they do a lot of work to make sure a veteran doesn't miss the opportunity for some service the VA provides or the Oregon VA and the like.

But I know that he really wanted the vet center in a way to be invisible, because he felt veterans don't want to be put on parade, "say oh here's our little veteran that we're taking care of." They're independent thinkers and individuals, and if the vets can run this and stay off the radar screen and that's what they want to do then that's what we should do. And - which is why in the early years with the vet center as well as the seminar courses, he always deferred to what the students wanted to do. And I think that's still what goes on. I think they change what they do at the vet center just depending on who happens to be here this time. And again, to the non-vets – like I assume all of us in this room. Even the Desert Storm Veterans, which now we're talking

2003. The veterans that came out of Afghanistan or have come out of later things, they can be so dissimilar and not line up in their needs, thoughts about things that. It's always going to be a fine balance of who are veterans that are here on campus, because that center needs to be responsive to them, which is why it always needs to be that our directors are always recently discharged out of the service.

AF: I think my last question is if you are able to share – is there a person or story that sticks out in your mind that has gone through the program?

SS: They - yeah, here's a good one for you, and I can't think of his name but you can track him down very quickly. One of our veterans that came here got one of those TA-ships, ran the Vet Center, and I saw him this summer – ran the Vet Center some years back, and then this summer I was at a dedication. You may have heard the name Senator Peter Courtney – he used to work here for the President's Office – but he was Senate President of the Oregon Senate for 23 years or something, and he retired. But that's what the Wellness Center is named after, that guy. But the state dedicated (and the City of Salem or wherever the money came from, a lot from the legislature), a Veteran's housing center – Court street, just right across from the Capitol building. And it's in an apartment complex for veterans, importantly, to keep veterans off the streets. And it's going to have family housing and it's supposed to launch here in January. They're waiting for, of all things, electrical breaker panels that were supply side problem. Anyways, at the ribbon-cutting dedication for it, we had Senator Courtney give a speech and Senator – brain drain, we have two senators, Senator Merkeley and the other with a “W”. Come on, you are supposed to know who our U.S. Senators are.

[Unidentified interviewer]: Wyden.

SS: Anyways, they were there, gave speeches and everything. But the new director of that entire apartment complex, which will also have support services, is this student that came out of the Vet Center. And so that was really a delight for me to see that, so I'd say. We've had other students come out of the Vet Center as undergraduates that have gone on to grad school and one of the early directors (and I can't think of his name right now, I could track it down) – he headed

off for a doctoral program in criminal justice at U.N.L.V. [University of Nevada Las Vegas] and with Dr. Brown's mentoring. But it's really more just knowing that it's there and that it's a good resource. But I was tickled to see that someone that spent time here in the Vet Center, that that was a real good stepping stone for what he's doing now.

JB: Great. So, looking forward, what is the future that you envision for the Veteran's Center? Do you think that – How do you think it will change and progress as the student body shifts?

SS: I think it's going to change the way the student body changes. I don't know what class level or year – second year, third year, first year you are, but you can talk to professors all the time, and we talk about that the students today are very different than even six years ago. And we can throw COVID into the mix and how does that change things and the like. And very definitely students today are different than when I was a student. But we also have like this Venn Diagram overlap – an extreme amount that's the same. I mean, an 18-year old is going to be an 18-year old, but society changes, digital platforms change, and very definitely our college students in the future. The concept of generative AI is going to be a big thing, and I think the same thing for who are these veterans are going to be coming out of the future military services, how does that service – what does it mean to be in the service? War is going to be war, it's always going – is going to be increasingly more high tech and the like. But in the kind of job duties that men and women would be doing can have some similarities with some new dissimilarities. And then, what does it mean for – what do they want to do when they come back to college? And then, if there's some new kind of need, because the new Army, the new Navy, the new whatever, has veterans leaving with slightly different experiences, we want Vet Centers to be able to adapt with that change.

And what you may not know is the reason these kinds of Veteran's Centers – another reason they're extremely important is again that age category, because when I grew up – and maybe in your hometowns – I don't know if you've ever heard of the V.F.W. [Veterans of Foreign Wars] or the American Legion, they're always big at Veterans parades or 4th of July parades (they have hats with medals all over.) V.F.W. – those are essentially private clubs all over the country – bars, dance halls, all that kind of stuff – and the V.F.W. stands for Veterans of

Foreign Wars. My father was a member, all the older men when I grew up were members, because they all came back from World War II or the Korean War, and those clubs served as Vet Centers (is what Bud was telling me), and to come be around other veterans. While it may look like you're just drinking booze and shooting pool, but you're hanging with others that understand the experiences that you had. And then even when I was in college I had some veterans tell me in college that they didn't join the V.F.W. or the American Legion because those were all Korean War or WWII guys and "they don't understand what I did in Vietnam." And then Bud was telling me that – was what the Afghan, the Iraq, Desert Storm, and all the Middle East stuff soldiers were saying, "Those Vietnam vets don't understand what it was for me." They were very different experiences and for a center to be effective it's going to have to always continuously adapt.

JB: Is there any specific aspects of the Veterans Center that you hope or expect will persist?

SS: Well, I hope that this campus always has this center because that means that we are attracting veteran(s) students from it. I think a veterans center also sends a symbolic message and it's more than symbolism. It is who we are – that we do care about our students. And it could be important and reassuring even for the family of a veteran – family member, son, daughter, spouse or something – knowing this institution cares, and you know what would – if it were to grow bigger and bigger for whatever reason it'd be if it could be more integrated with the other types of social services in the county, Polk County or Marion County, because there are active veteran associations besides the V.F.W. and American Legions. There are some other ones, as well as, you know, county public health will deal with veteran issues and the whole problem with the criminal justice system and homelessness and the like that I think the more professional that can be without losing the individual member touch would be the best of everything.

JB: Great, is there any other comments or subjects that you think would be beneficial to share?

SS: I just think that the – "What would be interesting" – because I don't know right now – how many students on this campus are X degrees of separation from a veteran. You know you

can play the Kevin Bacon six degrees of separation of knowing every Hollywood actor that there is, but it is amazing – a lot of vets will not publicly say that they are veterans. They just want to stay under the radar screen and because they don't want to be – you know the worst thing you could possibly ask any veteran, what - “Did you kill anybody?” – and that's a common question asked. And so what would be I think what would be very beneficial is we look at – for example– First Year Seminar classes – I don't know if any of you were young enough that you took First Year Seminar classes, those 207s and 107s here. It'd be, I think, fantastic if there was one that had a veterans theme to it. Not necessarily for veterans, but for folks that just want to understand more when we talk about you know – why is it that you drive around bigger cities and you always see older men in green fatigue coats and stuff? Why? Why is that? And if they're legitimately wearing those coats it's because they had been in, typically, in the Vietnam War which emotionally destroyed them. But I think there's a lot that we – when we think about the mission of the university. One of – not the mission, but a core theme to “Who is WOU?” We talk about diversity, equity, inclusion, access, those are more than just taglines, it's a way of living. And just as we want to be sure that we understand not everybody is from a certain social economic group or ethnic group or experience, because growing up in the downtown Portland is a very different experience than growing up in Coos Bay. And they both could be Hispanic kids or white kids or Asian kids, but they had very different experiences. And I think the more that we as an institution can recognize what is our diversity, veterans or family members of veterans are – I think, one of those things that comes under diversity.

JB: Yeah, thank you! That was very insightful.

SS: Okay! Anyway, well good luck on the project.

Interviewers: Yes. Thank you so much. Thank you.

SS: I had fun with one of your prior group's tag-a-long – this is with Dr. Jensen when she was driving classes under now the falling-apart COE building about the nuclear fallout shelter stuff and the little display, but I think that there is some good stuff. And I don't know if Dr. Doellinger has ever talked about it but there are a couple of books that were written about the

history of WOU and I don't know if there's anything about veterans in there other than there was Vet Village and there's some photographs of it – of returning G.I.'s from WWII. A lot of universities got swarmed by men coming back on the G.I. Bill and really established a culture at campuses and that's always kind of a fun thing to know is in the background.

JB: Yeah.

IM: Well, thank you very much.

JD: Thank you very much.

SS: Well you all have a very good weekend...

JB: You too!

SS: . . .and I guess the rains going to hit later tonight but it was kind of a nice tease for a while.

Logan Doerfler
Oral Interview Transcript
October 30, 2023



Interviewers/Transcription Editing: Carson Yon, Grace Smith, Stephanie McKenzie, Ben Loverin

LD: Logan Doerfler

CY: Carson Yon

GS: Grace Smith

SM: Stephanie McKenzie

BL: Ben Loverin

CY: Hello! This is an oral interview of Logan Doerfler, Director of the Western Oregon University Veteran Resource Center. He is being interviewed by our lovely interviewers: Carson Yon.

GS: Grace Smith.

SM: Stephanie McKenzie.

BL: Ben Loverin.

CY: It is October 30th, 2023, 10:02 AM, and our first question is...

GS: Logan, can you tell us about your service and how it brought you here?

LD: Sure, well first off thank you very much for doing this – happy to be here. So, my service and how it got me to be here. It's convoluted and it's going to kind of intermingle with my predecessors and their roles that helped to get me here. So to start from the beginning, I enlisted in the Oregon Army National Guard in 2011. When I was in high school. So I was a junior. Had to get the parents to sign off. That was a tough sell for my mom. But yeah, and started as a forward observer, which is like a dismounted scout. I won't give too many details, but skipping forward to 2012, I graduated high school, came to Western in 2012, 2013. Heard that I was selected to deploy, so I reclassified as infantry, which is just like a rifleman, a weapons specialist. And went over to Afghanistan for a year in 2014-15.

And coming back, I actually went to I.T.T. Technical [I.T.T. Technical Institute]. Was my first choice up in Portland. And I was studying Network Systems Administration and Cyber Security. But in 2016, the Department of Education actually pulled the plug on the institution. Like, they just dis-accredited it, shut down. It was a big deal. And unfortunately, that meant my only ever year as a 4.0 student was just like thrown in the trash. I lost my GI Bill. It was a huge bummer. But I made some good friends up there. And I knew Western, so I brought all of them with me to Western. So we came back here. That was the year 2016 and 2019. And that first year back here at Western, so 2016-17, that was when the VRC really started to kind of play into my future.

The director at the time, Andrew Holbert, which is like two predecessors ago, he met me when I enrolled. He kind of shot me an email. He was like, "Hey, you should come in to the VRC. You know, come check us out. We've got programs for veterans." I was like, oh, okay.

Yeah. So I brought the group in with me and we met him and his two of his work studies at the time. We met a couple of them today. And yeah, he was just really warm and welcoming and made us all feel like, okay, we have like a place here at Western and there's – veterans are like a known quality here at Western. And like, it just felt like there was some sort of administrative support, which is pretty key for us. There was a lot of instability at the time. And then, you know, moving forward, he helped me get involved in A.S.W.O.U. [Associated Students of Western Oregon University]. I served as the Judicial Administrator and got involved in the Student Veterans of America Club – a whole bunch of stuff. So, the office, like they were trying to engage these student veterans as they came to Western, come to Western, and then they helped them and find all these different avenues to engage. Because there was a lot of research showing that, especially for veterans, we're so used to moving around a lot, but if you can just make one meaningful social connection, like in a club or something like that, you're a lot more likely to retain and graduate. That's the philosophy behind that. And then I feel like that's great and well within the scope of his duties, but he really went above and beyond by networking and advocating for us with our representative [Paul] Evans and some other folks. And he ended up helping get the GI Bill Forever Movement passed through Congress, which basically just means that the students like myself who lost their GI Bill – lost that time for my ITT Tech, and other institutions like that that were disaccredited, we got our GI Bill time back. So I was able to extend another year here at Western, which would be finished within four years and prevent a huge amount of additional student loan debt. So that was super impactful for myself and some other students. That was when I truly was like, okay, I'm gonna do – like I'm gonna be involved in everything on campus and the VRC. Like, I'm gonna be doing all the programs and all the stuff. So got more involved with the Student Veteran Club leadership, which – people commonly confuse us. Like the VRC is the school, S.V.A. [Student Veterans Association] is the student club, but we are all right out of the same space. So people are just like – the military group and it could be either one. I was involved in both. So anyway, that's kind of how the Army led me to Western. And now I'm kind of forgetting the whole question. So could you remind me?

GS: No, that's really fine. Yeah, just was about your service and how it brought you here. Could you tell us any more about, you said Andrew, right?

LD: [Nodded]

GS: About anything that he did that you know of - while he was...

LD: Younger?

GS: Yeah, while he was here.

LD: Yeah sure! While he was younger. Yeah, for sure. So, the going backwards, Chronological rights myself, and then it is Colin Haynes and then it's Andrew Holbert. And I think both of them served for about three years in the role. Before that, there was maybe a coordinator, but there was no director of VRC to my knowledge. It wasn't necessarily a department. I think that's the part of this project, right? It's like figuring out exactly what the history was and putting something together. So for Andrew, he did a lot. He was the first one to actually cement the programs that still exist kind of in place. Like there was no equipment rental program there. You know, back then there was just a lot of student veterans didn't have access to technology. So that was kind of a big initiative for him. Let's get some MacBooks and Chromebooks and whatever, and then be able to like send those out to people for help. He's the one that really started a lot of the Veterans Day traditions that we have. Like we started doing a Veterans Breakfast and we have O.D.V.A. [Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs?] come in and do some exhibits. So I guess a lot of our standing traditions like that, the Memorial Day banquet, it kind of goes on and on. But to my knowledge, he was the one that really was like, okay, what student-oriented events and programs can we make a tradition? Yeah, and myself and Colin kind of carried it forward from there.

GS: And so how many years does this make it that you've been director here?

LD: I'm coming - I've been about, I've been here about two and a half. So it's about par for when the director usually fades out. But I'm not there yet. Don't worry. I'm still here.

GS: Good to know.

LD: Yeah.

GS: I think that's all the questions that I had for you. You want to go?

SM: Yeah, I have a really good follow-up question to that. What experience made you ready to be the Director of the Veteran's Center?

LD: That's a tough one, Stephanie. It's kinda hard to...

SM: ...Or was there any specific instances or skills you were taught?

LD: As far as the motivation, I would say it was going back to when he went to the Capitol and fought to get our GI Bill back. That was just such a huge service that I would never expect a random administrator at a school to do. That I was blown away. The skills – the skills is tough. I came from – before here, I was working for a small, private family-owned company called Lyrica Networks in Philomath. It's an internet service provider and I bumped around to a whole bunch of roles there, but I was leading a sales team before I came here. So, I would say about a year in that role got my administrative skills up to par to where I needed to be. Motivation was kinda already there, like we talked about. But it is really tough to point to one thing because this role is very broad, like, you have to know finances, you have to do programming, you have to advocate. It's a one-person, professional staff department, so kinda have to do a bit of everything and there's not really a great way to prepare for that. So that's tough.

SM: No, that's a good answer. Regardless of my difficult questions. And I guess my next one would be, what is something the Veteran's Center offers that maybe many people don't seem to realize, if there is anything?

LD: Yeah, I would say we're rebranding it right now to be a little more inclusive. But the program is currently called the Veterans Connections Program. We are rebranding the VRC in general to be more military affiliated, military families, you know dependents, guardsmen,

R.O.T.C. [Reserve Officer Training Corps], everyone, not just veterans. Especially as our active conflicts across the globe have kind of well – the Israel things kicking off, so who knows – but it was drawing down so, there less and less traditional veterans that our mission would serve, so the program that comes to mind is the Veterans Connection Program. And what that is – it is a database of staff and faculty here on campus who either served or they have military family, they're connected in some way and super supportive. And they basically just—we have a website for this—but it shows like, what their specialties are, what department they serve in, they have a bio about their experiences and why you can reach out to them. So if you are a – I don't know, a daughter of a Marine and you want to connect with a new advisor who kinda has some form of affiliation or some similar experiences, you can find someone on there that matches that and you can reach out to them. Or you can have us reach out, however they feel comfortable and we can get that connection going. So we also want to open it up to be more than that, maybe even the leaders in the community at some point but we're not just quite there yet. But I would say that program – it has been very impactful for those who know about it and use it but probably underknown – not as known as it should be. Yeah, thank you.

BL: So, my question is actually based sort of on a different point of – while the VRC does provide a great resource for veterans, what can students - that are not part of the veteran community – what could they do for veterans in and out of the classroom, as well as helping out for the VRC?

LD: That's a good question, that's a good question. There's a lot there. I would say in the classroom a lot of veterans are very hesitant to share their experiences. Most veterans that are in the classroom are non-traditional students, they are usually a little bit older. Most, well not most, but some have families and they bring a lot of life experience to the table. So I guess just like openness just to kind of hear them out. There's, there's a lot of weird stigma when it comes to veterans, especially combat veterans, and that stuff is changing regularly but there's a lot of hesitancy to share. But I think especially when you're doing small group work, those kind of settings you can draw out those experiences and just be willing to listen and entertain in a new perspective would be really cool, but sometimes they're hesitant to share because they don't want to offend people, whatever and yeah. Can you restate the question really cause I feel like...

LD: ...Cause there's a few things I want to hit on.

BL: No yeah sorry, the question was more so inside the classroom – how can we help and outside of the classroom?

LD: Right.

BL: How can we help and it can't – is there positions for not non-veterans?

LD: Yeah.

BL: ...to help in the VRC?

LD: Heck yeah good question, so outside in general I would say engaging in the programs the easiest way. Everything we do is open to everyone like uh veteran's day week is coming up next week. We have like a ton of stuff going on like a huge board game night a huge [Laughs] nerd out upstairs in this building [Werner University Center] it's going to be super fun. Anyone can come by. We're putting out and taking down the flags everyday throughout that week. Cause we don't have light on them so you know we gotta take them down. But yeah – we have an open roster, you can sign up for stuff like that. And in general just stop by the VRC and get a free cup of coffee, hang out and just talk to some people. You know there's a lot of student vets that come through there and we're all pretty talkative, so love to just meet and chat with new people. Kinda generic, so I guess engaging with programming and just come on by and see what's up, have a snack, have some coffee. And then lastly was...

BL: Non-veteran students volunteer in any way for the VRC or help out in any other veteran programs?

LD: Got you. Thank you, yeah, my memory is kinda like a goldfish.

BL: Oh, that's alright.

LD: I would say I kind of dipped in that a little bit by that you know coming to the VRC, volunteer for programming. But I would say more directly it would be awesome to have nonmilitary folks working with the club, the Student Vets of America Club because you can be an officer in that club or a general member and engage and do all kinds of stuff. It is military culture based, but they do all kinds of stuff. They do travel, they do hiking, they partner with a ton of clubs to offer to do different stuff. Like they just did a game night and magic night with the board game club. They'll go do hikes especially in spring and summer, with Outdoor Rec and outdoor pursuits. And they're doing like - there's stuff every week. So I would say that is a really good outlet if you just wanna get a little more exposure and do some volunteerism and stuff like that, the Student Vets Club is definitely a solid way. Three of the work studies that work in the Veterans Resource Center currently are leaders in that club. There are usually a lot of overlap like I was talking about earlier. So if anyone wants to learn more just come on in and you can always point in the right direction. Yeah.

BL: Perfect

CY: Alright, and so I have two questions for you. One of them is: What did the Veteran Resource Center mean to you when you were a student and then what does the Veteran Resource Center mean to you as a Director and has that changed over time or has it always been constant?

LD: Man, that is a good question! Holy smokes! As a student – cause I was driving pretty far originally – I was driving from Canby every day. So it was like a good base on campus for me. We had lockers and we have food and we had all the stuff. So I came and dropped my stuff early got a cup of coffee and get ready for the day. So it was my checkpoint I guess. And most of the friends that I'm still connected with I met through VRC, so it was just an awesome spot where we would just come hang out between classes and just kind of – Yeah, just checkpoint our spot on campus. And now it's a lot more than that because I feel because I was treated so well when I was a student here. I am very passionate about my role and I want to do everything I can to give the students who use the VRC more than I had. That's what we are all about – is providing more

than our experience and more than those who came before us. I am trying to figure out the emotion but I am a little – I just wanna be like a beneficiary. I just want to give as much as I can and open up as many doors as possible and make sure that we are always keeping our student vets on top on changes to the V.A. [Veterans Administration]. And there is so many different organizations that we have to communicate with to stay on top of stuff and we try to be a spot where someone can come in and ask basically any question about benefits or school, etc. and have an answer so – being as knowledgeable as possible is super important. And did you ask how I feel about it? Specifically?

CY: Yeah. I also asked how you feel about it and if like going from student to director if your feelings have changed at all about the student resource center?

LD: I guess I would say I just feel more close to the space, right? Like the words I keep thinking of are like not the words I wanna use, like “fatherly”?

[Group Laughter]

LD: I'm not a dad, but I have a lot of care. Man – I need to think about this more – but yeah, I have a lot of care and I want to see it thrive. That's the best I can do right now. I'm sorry.

[Group Laughter]

CY: It's okay! Alright, well if anyone has any more questions?

GS: What is something you guys are hoping to offer in the future? Some things that might be in the works or something you personally would hope one day that you could offer?

LD: Well, if we keep – our engagement has been – It was rapid and it's still steadily trickling upward over the last two years, partly because during COVID, like a lot of stuff changed, right? With remote and everything. But yeah, if that keeps up, like we'll need a bigger space at some point. So if we get to that stage, I would love to help transition the VRC into a new successful

space. Something else I would like to see is more endowments and scholarships for our National Guardsmen, beneficiaries, dependents, like these other types of groups that are military affiliated. There's no one else on campus that I know about that advocates for those people, which is why I'm trying to bring those responsibilities into this role. But getting some strong endowments and supporters up for those students, that's important to me. Because not all of them have access to GI Bill or some of these other amazing benefits, but they're a part of the family, so I want to make sure we're taking good care of them. Yeah, so comes to mind.

SM: Would that family include programs like J.R.O.T.C. [Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps] coming into college?

LD: Yeah! Heck yeah.

SM: Okay.

LD: Basically, as soon as the foots in the door – like, they get the packet, they're comin'. Let's get them in the VRC. Let's hook them up with whatever they need, like - Let's get you a advisor that is the branch of service you are interested in going into. Let's – whatever we can think of. So, yeah R.O.T.C., definitely. J.R.O.T.C., why not. Their trajectory is Western, _____ [Inaudible].

GS: Do you have a general idea of how many people you guys have right now?

LD: I do. This term we have about - can't measure it precisely because some veterans will just not use their benefits, they'll save it for later, so you don't have a good way to track it unless they were like – who the – which is not most of them. So we have about 84 veterans that are currently using the benefit and our total population is about 155. So oof, math on a recording, dangerous. 65 to 75, I would say of the beneficiaries and National Guardsmen. So about 150, and every week we see about 30 to 50 of them in the VRC, which is kind of insane, because that's up from like 5% my first year, and originally now it's like 40, which is nuts.

GS: That is a very small space to see that many people.

LD: It's a lot, yeah. When there's more than like ten people in there at once, it's like, oof, it's really busy. It gets warm super fast and doesn't cool down. I'm like, oh no. So yeah. Question?

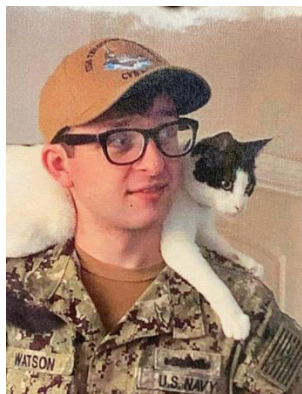
GS: Do you have anything that you want to add that we didn't necessarily cover that you want to be recognized in this?

LD: I wish I did. I guess one thing that's just very important to me in how we operate in general is like my personal mantra is try to cultivate goodwill and I push that into the VRC. So everything we're doing and every way we can, we just want to be making people's experiences better and their lives easier. And that could be any number of ways from – like we get hit up all the time, “Hey, you're actually a veteran, can you come help us move some furniture?” Like, “Hey, is there a retirement center in town?” Like a new person moving in, they need help moving or whatever it may be. In or outside of Western, our goal is just to help the community have a positive experience. So I would hope that we can get to a point where the stigma and reputation of the VRC is that we're just here to help anyone who has a need, but especially our community. So.

GS: Very cool.

LD: So I'd like to add...

CY: Alright! Well, thank you so much for being interviewed by us, and have a wonderful rest of your day.



Dio Watson

HST301 Oral History Interview with Dio Watson,
by Katie Altheide, Ellie Osborn, Jillian Barnhurst, & Gabe Grecny
Transcription: Ellie Osborn, Jillian Barnhurst, & Gabe Grecny
2023 November 8

KA: Katie Altheide

EO: Ellie Osborn

JB: Jillian Barnhurst

GG: Gabe Grecny

DW: Dio Watson

KA: We are conducting an interview here in the Veterans Resource Center. I am Katie, this is Ellie, this is Jilly, and this is Gabe, and you are Dio, and we will get right into the questions.

DW: Okay.

KA: So the first one is: What made you interested in the Resource Center and did anyone or anything have an influence on why you chose to go there?

DW: I – my first term here I came to the Veteran Resource Center because I really needed a textbook that was really expensive and I was just out of the military and I had just moved and I was so busy it was just crazy. So I didn't have time to get the textbook, but they had a copy of it and they still do in the – in our office here and I was able to borrow it for the term and I got

through that class just fine and I felt very confident after that, I could come here for help. And then I got offered the job the following term and said yes. Didn't look back.

JB: So what makes the Center important to you and how did you hear about it?

DW: I heard – gosh, how did I hear about this? I think Logan, the Director, reached out to me when I got accepted to Western and I think I probably would've ignored the email like most students if I had not been living in San Diego at the time and I was currently at that time separating from the military and was applying to school and registering for classes in San Diego, which is hard to do when school is here in Monmouth. But Logan was really, really helpful with that process. He and David Anderson [WOU Registrar's office] both reached out to me and made sure that communication was really solid and I was able to apply and get all my benefits and come here on my first day and figure stuff out and be just fine. So thanks to them.

GG: How would you like to see the Veteran Resource Center improved in the future?

DW: There are a lot of projects that we are working on currently. The V.R.C. [Veteran Resource Center] is really really entwined with the Student Veterans of America [SVA] club. Three of our student workers here – all three of our student workers here are leadership in S.V.A., so we're seeing a lot of that grow together which is awesome. We're doing a lot more events. A lot more outreach for students and veterans. We're getting more veterans on campus, which is really cool. And, I think in terms of like the space, I think we have some plans to maybe get a bigger space. It's something that we're talking about, which we'll be excited for and also maybe a more useful space. There – those are some things we're hopeful for...

GG: Useful how?

DW: Like, we would love, like the access to a sink or water inside the office because being able to make coffee inside of our office would be fantastic. Right now we're running all the way to Valsetz twice a day to make coffee, so which takes like 30 minutes, cause that machine is so slow. [Everyone laughs]

DW: So there are some little minor improvements like that. And then obviously our system and how we're running things; our funds that we're able to spend on our events and fun things that we're doing around here to help students, has been growing immensely as well. So we're figuring out really interesting ways on how to use those.

EO: Okay, so I have just a couple more questions for you: What is your role personally here in the V.R.C.

DW: I don't have like, an official role per se. My only official role here is Work Study, because I get paid through the Veterans Affairs. Technically I work for Veteran Affairs and not the school. Whatever, that's confusing.

What everybody looks to me for, in the V.R.C., is a lot of Graphic Design. So all the posters, all of the art you see around, and the other stuff, is mostly stuff that I have put up or mostly stuff that I've created. All of our promotional materials I create, unless it's created from something we do from a previous year, which is pretty much those two posters that we use for this one week every year. I'm also kind of the outspoken one [Giant laugh].

So it's not entirely surprising that I volunteered to do this interview. I tend to be kind of the voice of...

GG: I can tell.

DW: ...of reason and gaiety [Laughs] in the office.

GG: Were you the one who put the crayons in the snack basket?

DW: Oh! I was not. That was Brandt.

GG: Was he a Marine?

DW: He was not a Marine, but he loves making fun of Marines. And to be fair, for a long time we did have edible crayons. [Everybody laughs]

GG: It's a joke in the Army that Marines are so...

DW: ...So dumb.

GG: So thickheaded...

DW: Hey, red's the best flavor.

EO: Really, yeah? So how has it helped your professional or academic career?

DW: I've definitely had opportunities working here that I never would have had, if I hadn't worked on campus or hadn't been involved in the V.R.C. I got to do a practicum with Abby's House last summer, which was amazing, but I would probably never have done that if I hadn't met all the fantastic people at Abby's House, without working here. Because we work together so often and we share so many projects, I really get to meet a lot of community here on campus. And that has allowed me to really connect with my instructors, get recognized and really have a voice, especially in the biological and public health communities. Being really connected here on campus, and working here has been immensely helpful just for making the connections that matter.

EO: So, we saw on the board that you like to tell sea stories.

DW: I do like to tell sea stories.

EO: Please tell us one!

DW: PG-13?

EO: Oh, it doesn't matter.

DW: Okay...

[Everybody laughs]

KA: We're all adults.

DW: I am the master of pranks. I was well known on the ship for – I never started a prank war, never once. Everybody knew that I never started prank wars, but, if you started one with me, I would finish it. My favorite prank that I ever pulled on a friend, on the ship is – prior to going out underway for 60 days, so we were on the boat with no connection to the land for 60 days. No internet, no cellphone service, nothing. [Everyone gasps] On day 52, I stuck a 12-inch long dildo [Everyone laughs] to the top of his rack, which only has about a foot and half clearance to the top of the bed that he lays in. And it's super dark, so he just rolled in and got dick slapped. [Everyone laughs]. And I won that war. [Laughs]

GG: Where'd you even get it?

DW: I bought it at a sex shop prior to going on the really long underway. Because I knew that I was going to pull that prank on him and no one has ever topped that on the ship, as far as I know. So, I ended all wars with one simple act and it was fantastic.

EO: I love that.

DW: Thank you, [Laughs] people don't mess with me.

[Everyone laughs]

EO: So how was ship life?

DW: Ship life was very structured. I – on a really long underways – I would just turn my brain off and go auto pilot for like weeks at a time. It was just easier to just like, like, nope I’m just going to turn my brain off and go to sleep and work and sleep and work and sleep and work until we get into port and I can go out, have fun and do you know, cool things in Singapore, Guam or Dubai or all these really cool places that I visited, so...

EO: Oh, that’s awesome. Man, that’s a lot of places! So did you do like a lot of – what was your work kind of like?

DW: I was trained as a nuclear electronics technician, but ended up doing something else entirely. I was an operations specialist. So mostly radar. I was a specialist in my fleet for a specific piece of equipment that took a lot of education to be able to operate and maintain and I was known as the SME on the ship or the Subject Matter Expert. So definitely a lot of really interesting work and a lot of communication with a lot of officers. That kind of scared me a lot of the time, I was like, “You’re really high ranked and I could probably die if I sneeze wrong right now,” so....

EO: What was your rank?

DW: I was – I left the navy as E5, Enlisted Fifth Rank, so Petty Officer Second Class.

EO: Oh, okay.

DW: Nothing great, but not bad. [Laughs]

EO: Well thank you for serving our country.

DW: Yep. [Laughs]. Thank you.

KA: Alright, I think that concludes our interview...

GG: Yep.

KA: Thank you so much Dio. This has been Katie, Ellie, Jilly, Gabe.

DW: Yeah, of course, I'm sorry for being late, [Laughs].

GG: It's okay.

Founding the VRC: The Life and Legacy of Bud Brown

William B. “Bud” Brown (1945-2022) worked tirelessly to bring the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) to WOU. Bud served two tours in Vietnam as a 2nd Lieutenant from the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC). Bud lost a brother in Vietnam and wanted to “go and replace him.” Like many who served in Vietnam, Bud became disenfranchised with the military industrial complex, the effects of which he had witnessed firsthand. He said that those who went to bootcamp and underwent total military immersion became “organic robots,” meant to serve rather than question authority.

In 1992, Brown earned his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and worked as a professional witness in cases involving veterans who were suffering the effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. By 2002, he became a professor of Criminal Justice at WOU, integrating his experience as a professional witness into his coursework.

Dr. Brown noticed the alienation of Vietnam veterans at Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and American Legion meetings. Full of World War II and Korean War veterans, there was a general feeling that this older generation didn’t fully understand what soldiers in Vietnam went through. As the United States continued to get in more complex and controversial conflicts in the Middle East, Bud noticed a similar rift forming between veterans of more recent conflicts, whether in the courtroom; at the University of Michigan-Flint and Wayne State University, where he worked after the Gulf War; or even at WOU after The US invaded Iraq and Afghanistan. Bud decided that he had to do what he could to help this younger generation of Veterans reintegrate into society.

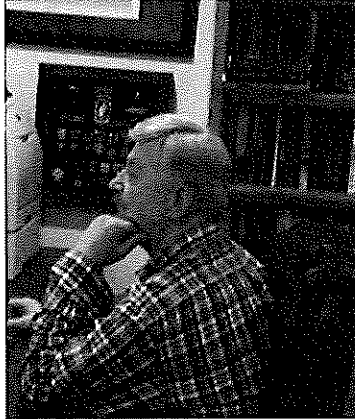
Dr. Brown was concerned with the high veteran involvement in the criminal justice system and the difficulty that veterans had in college. Bud said that he had seen “[student veterans] churned up and spit out” of various colleges. Never one to mince words, Bud called this pattern an example of “cultural incompetence.” He believed that WOU provided the perfect environment for veterans and their families. He knew that many veterans find the typical American University experience frivolous after living in a military environment for so long, especially those who are older than their classmates or who already have families of their own. This issue is far less of a problem at WOU, and in 2013, Dr. Brown set his plan in motion to secure a safe space for veterans and their families to connect with others who share similar experiences.

This lofty goal required funding, and Bud sought the help of Dr. Steve Scheck—who served as Dean of College of Arts and Sciences for seven years and Provost for another five years—to obtain this funding. Bud secured a space specifically for his program in 2014, which would grow into a full center staffed by and for veterans seeking to further their education by the following year. Also in 2015, Dr. Brown started offering seminars specifically for veterans. Due to popular demand, these courses were opened for the families of veterans who got in “By an Approval of Bud Brown.”

Bud cared little for recognition. Providing a space for veterans to feel comfortable was always rewarding enough. However, his undying support—not for violent conflict or the war profiteering of the military industrial complex—but for the human beings who had undergone

complete military immersion, is deserving of recognition. His legacy, which is carried on by the next generation of students and faculty, serves as a testament to his commitment to student veterans.

Jakob Ritter



Dr. Brown in his office, 2012

A Framework for Understanding the Goals of the Veterans Resource Center (VRC)

Context: The unfortunate truth is that, historically, U.S. veterans have been treated poorly by the government, the public, and even institutions specifically designed to assist with their needs. Upon returning home, veterans have been subject to protest, criticism, violence, and a lack of sufficient support systems. This is in addition to the various physical, emotional, and mental ailments they have to endure, such as PTSD, various brain injuries, amputated limbs, etc.

The experiences of veterans vary widely depending on the conflicts they served in, yet a common theme persists: a difficult transition back into civilian life. Understanding this history is crucial in shaping the goals of the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) and ensuring that current and future veterans receive the support they deserve.

Bud Browns Military Experience: Returning veterans from Vietnam faced a divided nation; many were met with protests, stigma, and inadequate institutional support. Over 100,000 Vietnam veterans live in Oregon. One of these veterans was Dr. William “Bud” Brown, who served two tours in Vietnam as a 2nd Lieutenant. Bud Brown’s brother was killed in Vietnam, a loss that profoundly influenced his decision to serve. His personal experiences in combat and his exposure to the military-industrial complex deeply shaped his views on war and reintegration into society. This led him to dedicate his career to helping veterans transition successfully into civilian and academic life.

Development of the VRC: Preceding the VRC, there existed a student-held position titled “WOU Veteran Student Liason”, whose role was to help veteran students have a successful educational experience and to help faculty, staff, and students to understand the veteran experience

In the Early 2010s, Brown led an upper-division seminar course titled “Reintegration” at WOU. With a focus on reintegrating Veteran students into civilian life, it was originally exclusive to veterans. However, polling of the class suggested widespread approval of the course’s expansion leading to the inclusion of veteran family members who sought to understand the experiences of their loved ones.

Recognizing the need for a dedicated space, in 2013, Brown campaigned for a Veterans Center where veterans could gather, find peer support, and access resources. He was greatly assisted in his endeavor to enact the VRC by the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Steven Scheck. Together they worked to ensure that WOU became a welcoming institution for veterans.

At first, they lacked sufficient funding, scrounging up used furniture and a staff made entirely of volunteers. Eventually, Scheck became Provost and Vice-President of Academic Affairs, allowing him greater control over the center's budget. At a similar time, around January 2014, multiple veterans, including Army brass, National Guard, Air Force, and a Brigadier-General unanimously expressed their support of the project to then President of WOU, Mark Weiss, elevating the VRC to a permanent location with adequate funding.

WOU Veterans Program Advisory Board: Formed in 2013, this internal advisory board was made up entirely of WOU faculty members including: Joel Alexander, Dean Braa, William Brown, Peter Callero, Ed Dover, Stephen Gibbons, Mark Henlels, Molly Mayhead, Mary Pettenger, and Robbin Smith.

External review of the VRC: Also formed in 2013, the then titled “the Veterans Success Center”, an external report was created to demonstrate the legitimacy of Brown’s program. This report included formal support on behalf of many people, including: a licensed neuropsychologist, Robert Stanulist; the Director of Education for Veterans for the Oglala Sioux tribe, George Amiotte; Veterans Representative for Oregon Employment Department, Willie Elfering; and finally Major Evan R. Seamone, U.S. Army, who in November 2013

Major Seamone expressed his support of the program by stating,

“The [VRC’s] proactive posture embraces the special realities facing veteran students and creates a web of support that is capable of sustaining these students both on and off campus.... the veteran student can receive input from different trusted sources when contemplating life's challenges. Furthermore, the veteran student enjoys a continued sense of service to society by providing peer support and participating in orientation for future students... For the above reasons, I fully support the development of the Western Oregon University Veteran Success Center which would undoubtedly serve as a model for other universities across the Nation.”

Difficulties in Transitioning from Military to Civilian and Academic life

William “Bud” Brown was the first to recognize the need for a community space for veteran students as they made the transition away from military life to a civilian and academic environment. For help, “Bud” reached out to an Army Major named Evan R. Seamone, who understood these issues faced by veterans and was serving as a JAG officer and prosecuting cases for the Pentagon at the time. “Bud” asked Major Seamone to review the initiatives and structure of the V. R. C., and the response was overwhelmingly positive. These are the words of Evan R. Seamone from an email between the two.

“Research consistently demonstrates the function of social support networks among persons with similar experiences as an accelerant for recovery from Posttraumatic Stress and other trauma-related conditions.”

Dr. Stephen Scheck as Provost secured a dedicated space and stipend for veteran graduate students working as teacher’s assistants after seeing the personal commitment of William Brown to help with veteran students. With the location and funding, Stephen Scheck and “Bud” Brown created the earliest form of today’s Veteran Resource Center. Eventually the success and opportunities of the V.R.C. made it possible to acquire yearly funding as a part of Veteran Affairs, and the position of director is now a dedicated professional position, which might still happen to be a WOU graduate student. This reflects the impact of Bud Brown and Stephen Scheck on Western Oregon University, and its enduring commitment to creating a supportive and authentic community for veterans in higher education. In his own words Dr. Stephen Scheck stated:

“Well, they went into the service and got out after two, four, six, eight, ten years, and they're coming back here. And you can imagine if you've been somewhere around the world in

this military environment that coming back and sitting in a classroom and being as excited or upset about what happened at the party Friday night just doesn't jive.”

Logan Doerfler was a Director of the Veterans Resource Center at Western Oregon University. After serving in Afghanistan in 2014-2015 Logan came back to the United States to study at I.T.T. Technical Institute in Portland, Or. While studying the institute was disaccredited and Logan lost his G.I. bill. Having heard of Western Oregon University, Logan decided to bring his friends to Western where they met former director Andrew Holbert. In their earliest interactions Andrew Holbert was able to make a lasting impression on Logan and his friends by reaching out and welcoming them and then encouraging them to get involved in the programs for veterans. This feeling of community and acceptance is what continues to guide Logan as he works to help more veterans use their G.I. benefits, form positive relationships with their peers on campus, and graduate! Logan Doerfler stated the following in an oral interview:

“There was a lot of research showing that, especially for veterans, we’re so used to moving around a lot, but if you can make just one meaningful social connection, like in a club or something like that, you’re a lot more likely to retain and graduate.”

Exhibit by Tyler James

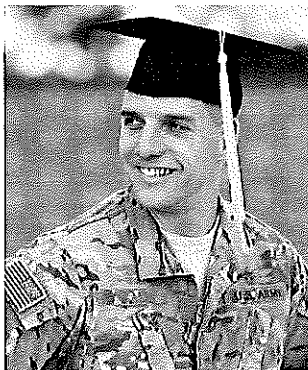


Photo by Mie Ahmt, from the D'aniello institute for Veterans

and Military Families, at Syracuse University.

PTSD and Militarism Influencing the Creation of the VRC

Mental health conditions such as PTSD from time spent in the military offer insight into struggles that veterans faced during their time serving. From bootcamp to war, soldiers face challenges that leave lasting impressions on their lives. Being one of Western Oregon University's Administrators on campus with ties to the creation of the Veterans Resource Center, Professor Stephen Scheck, current professor of Biology and former dean of College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at WOU was interviewed to expand on his role in the VRC's creation. Scheck talks about having worked closely with former WOU Professor Bud Brown (1945–2022). Brown initially reached out to Scheck to convince him to help establish the VRC and the role it could have in aiding Veterans with PTSD find the help they may need through returning to civilian life and becoming a student.

Bud Brown served two tours in Vietnam and used his experiences to work to establish the WOU VRC. Scheck explains in this interview that Bud Brown sought to establish a recourse center for veterans, many of whom potentially struggling from PTSD from active duty as well as just being involved in the military. much can be inferred from Schecks interview about the effects that the military industrial complex has had on veterans.Scheck described having discussed with Bud Brown about how the military industrial complex works to shape men and women into ideal soldiers comparable to “Organic Robots” where questions to commands are considered taboo and “Yes sir” is the only appropriate response. Brown is said by Scheck to have become disenfranchised with the role of militarism and its effects on soldiers. These effects, beginning at boot camp then continuing potentially into war pose continued struggle for veterans working to mesh with society once again.

An email chain between Sheck and Brown further expands on Brown's focus to help rehabilitate Veterans as Brown states "I have been here at WOU since the beginning of the Iraq war...I witnessed a generation of students get churned up and spit out by those institutions." Sheck noted that Brown wished to use his understanding of what veterans go through to help them go to college and continue with their lives and potential aspirations. This reality made it important for Brown to work in accommodating services and aid to veterans that need it. Sheck continues to explain that Brown's philosophical views on the military, following his tours in Vietnam, were overall negative. This, playing into his prior comment on Brown's disenfranchisement with the military industrial complex is explained by Brown's personal understanding of how destructive military service can be. In the time that Brown served, the public view on the Vietnam war was overall negative and soldiers returning home were not treated well at all. With hardly any mental health or simply overall help for veterans returning home from war, for Brown it made sense to establish a center where services could be offered to anyone who needed this help.

Bud Brown wanted to create the Veterans Resource Center to access these mental health factors of veterans returning from service. With aid coming in many forms, especially in adapting to meet the personal needs of veterans struggling from PTSD, The VRC works to successfully help veterans work through college in ways that prevent PTSD or any other mental health issues arriving from military service harming the education of Veterans. Thanks to Brown's service and work to make college more accessible, any veteran and or families of veterans can find the help that can usher them into further success.

Billy France-Bagwell

The Role of the Veterans Resource Center at Western Oregon University

Throughout the 2010s Professor Bud Brown, a former professor at Western who had previously served in Vietnam, was concerned about veterans entering college after military service due to the isolation many experienced as a result of the unique experiences and challenges many lived through during their stint in active service. He sought to create the Veteran's Resource Center at Western Oregon University in order to provide support and community for those who pursue higher education after exiting the military.

With work beginning on the project as early as November of 2013 the Veteran's Resource Center (VRC) has come a long way since its initial concept was proposed by Bud Brown. The VRC was initially envisioned by Bud Brown to help veterans find both stability after their service and success in whatever they sought to achieve next in their lives. Brown's concerns were rooted in his own personal experiences with the subject, he had witnessed student veterans be cast to the wayside too many times following the implementation of the GI Bill, and as such sought to break the cycle. For those who may have felt isolated by the college experience due to their unique lived experiences, the VRC provides a safe space where they can network with those who may be able to relate to the challenges of starting college, and those who can potentially provide support where needed. According to the words of Dio Watson, a student veteran who later became an employee of the VRC, "I really get to meet a lot of community here on campus. And that has allowed me to really connect with my instructors, get recognized and really have a voice ... being really connected here on campus, and working [at the VRC] has been immensely helpful just for making the connections that matter."

Bud Brown's goal in creating the VRC on campus was not only to provide support for those leaving the military, but to combat the negative effects of military service as well. Since

Brown had first-hand experience with the negative impact military service can have on an individual, creating a space in which individuals can receive support moving forward alongside likeminded people was a top priority when envisioning the project that would result in the VRC. Ultimately, the VRC would end up in the Werner University Center, a hub of sorts on campus, creating an environment which is rooted in the heart of the student community at Western Oregon University. For the VRC to succeed at aiding the community it sought to, it was necessary for support networks and social programs to exist through the project. Collaboration with groups such as the Student Veterans of America Club allows for veterans to form meaningful connections during their time as university students, something that studies have proven significantly improves retention and graduation rates. In addition to larger programs such as the Student Veterans of America Club the VRC has programs like the Veterans Connection Program which is dedicated to connecting veterans from all walks of life across Western Oregon's campus. For the VRC to become the best version of itself as originally envisioned by Bud Brown and fulfill its role on campus it is crucial that a wide range of students involve themselves in the activities and programs the VRC has to offer.

Jackson Albrecht



(Students making use of the VRC lounge located in the Werner University Center)

The VRC Facing The Hurdle Of Change

In Western Oregon University's oral histories with Veteran Resource Center (VRC) representatives Dio Watson, Director Logan Doerfler, and Professor Stephen Scheck, they each provide their perspectives on how the VRC interprets the needs of WOU's veteran community, and how the VRC allows room to accommodate changes. As a space of support and community at WOU, the VRC faces the natural hurdle of handling the diverse needs of the people that it helps. In Professor Stephen Scheck's interview, he and those interviewing him brought attention to one part of this hurdle rooted in diversity – that hurdle is “change.”

Dr. Scheck, who helped establish the VRC along with Bud Brown in the 2013-2014 school year, emphatically stated, “Students today are very different than even six years ago,” and he further commented that “society changes, digital platforms change, and very definitely our college students in the future [will change].” Dr. Scheck followed that change is a hurdle every veteran sympathizes with when returning to civilian life, and that some veterans find comfort in organizations like the V.F.W (The Veterans of Foreign Wars) or the American Legion, but, that doesn't work for every veteran. Even in active duty veteran experiences greatly vary. Dr. Scheck further emphasized that veterans' needs change by generation, especially with veterans experiencing active duty in many different circumstances depending on when they served. When veterans come back to civilian life they have unique wants and needs. Dr. Scheck stated, “we want Vet Centers to adapt with that change.”

The Veteran Resource Center on our WOU campus makes handling the change that comes with veterans' experiences a large part of its identity as a resource center. The VRC wants veterans and their families to feel welcome and drawn to WOU's campus. The VRC wants people to

understand the experience of veterans, particularly veterans' families and other students. To do all of this, the VRC listens to the veterans in WOU's community, and provide the care and resources that are appropriate according to change.

In the WOU oral histories with the VRC representatives the interviewees demonstrate the VRC's reactions to change, from its beginning in 2013 to now. Dr. Scheck describes the veterans' most initial need with simply requiring a space. Together with Bud Brown and other veterans, they scrounged furniture and accumulated a small budget to start the VRC. Years later, education was technologically changing. VRC Director Logan Doerfler described in his interview that the previous VRC Director Andrew Holbert started a technology rental system for veterans to keep up with these changing educational methods. Director Holbert also initiated many of the VRC's active programs for veterans. Dio Watson, doing work study for the VRC in 2023 to 2024, described how the VRC is now working with other on-campus organizations like the Student Veterans of America club (SVA) and Abby's House to better reach out to veterans and integrate them into the campus! All of this is a part of embracing the change in programs and resources for WOU's veterans according to the evolving needs. In ten years from now the Veteran Resource Center will hopefully continue to provide for the changing needs of WOU's diverse veterans, and continue to make them feel welcome as part of the community in ever changing ways.

Zephen Wilkinson



"Grateful Generations," *U.S Department of Defense*, Accessed February 12, 2025 from defense.gov/Multimedia/Photos/igphoto/2003022288.

How mental Health has shaped the VRC at Western Oregon University

The Veterans Resource Center was set up by Dr. Bud Brown, a veteran of the Vietnam War, who explained the psychological implications of military service and the need for systematic support during the reintegration process. According to Dr. Steve Scheck, Brown was determined to assist veterans in returning to college and adjusting to civilian life. He “wanted to help veterans that got out of the service to get back into college and get on with personal life.”¹ Brown and Scheck understood that some veterans have PTSD regardless of having been in combat; there was a need to create a safe place for veterans to interact with other veterans who can relate to them. The VRC was not only a resource center but also a home away from home for veterans, where they would feel wanted and less alone in their fight to recover from their mental health issues.

Besides being a place where people could turn to for companionship, the VRC also performed an essential function in making sure that veterans could get the help they needed for PTSD and other mental health issues. Dr. Scheck explained how it was so important for the veterans to have something like that where they would feel understood, stating, "Bud pushed for us to offer a haven for veterans, where they could hang out with like-minded veterans."² Some

¹ Steve Scheck, interview by Hallie Tasker, Isaac Mayhugh , Jandika Borden, Alex Fawcett, Juno Debry, 2023, Western Oregon University, page 4

² Steve Scheck, interview by Hallie Tasker, Isaac Mayhugh , Jandika Borden, Alex Fawcett, Juno Debry, 2023, Western Oregon University, page 5

veterans face challenges adapting to civilian life, as they often fail to connect with their traditional college peers who have not experienced military life. Thus, Scheck and Brown established the center for veterans only, which provided students with peer advisors and therapists who could help them understand the psychological consequences of military operations, thus creating a healing and productive learning environment.

Brown and Scheck understood that mental health support was as important as academic support in helping veterans transition to civilian and college life. "Veteran students carry with them the baggage from their experiences in the military culture. Many of these students have been to combat areas of operation. The experiences and memories they acquired in a combat area cannot be discarded."³ These memories are manifested in PTSD, anxiety, depression, or simply as a difficulty to understand and be understood in environments that have not experienced such events. The VRC provided a place where veterans could go to counseling, talk to other veterans who had experienced similar issues through peer mentors, and find information on how to help with trauma. The center provided mental health workshops and support groups to help veterans cope with the psychological aspects of their service. Brown and Scheck understood that mental health was not only about treatment but also about providing a place where veterans could feel valued, heard, and supported in their healing process.

The establishment of the Veterans Resource Center at Western Oregon University was a significant step in helping veterans with the mental health issues they encounter when changing over to civilian and academic life. Peer mentorship, counseling, and dedicated programming

³ *WOU Veteran Success Center, Draft of Veteran Center Functions* (Veterans Success Center, n.d.), 1

made the VRC a critical support system for student veterans to have the tools and connections they need to succeed. Their efforts have left a lasting impact: WOU is a more welcoming and supportive place for those who have served in the military.

Hayden Bence



4

⁴ "Soldier Hugging," Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, <https://www.vvmf.org/topics/PTSD/>.

Veteran Resource Center: Connections and Partnerships with Other Organizations

The creation of Western Oregon University's Veteran Resource Center did not occur with a singular purpose in mind, but rather it had multiple goals it intended to accomplish. Bud Brown, criminal justice professor and veteran who helped found the VRC, had extensive experience being a professional witness for trials that included post traumatic stress in veterans. These experiences encouraged him to push for the creation of a Veterans Resource Center that would support a network of connections and community. Throughout its history the Veteran Resource Center has collaborated with other WOU programs and outside organizations in order to achieve its intended objectives. Additionally, the VRC staff and students have also formed connections with these other programs and organizations regardless of whether they are engaged in active collaboration.

Early in the creation of the VRC around 2013, the WOU Veteran Success Center drafted a document outlining the intended functions of the VRC. Within this document, the intent to form effective working relationships with other WOU support services was made explicitly clear. Some of the support services listed in this original draft of the VRC functions included the admissions office, registrar, student affairs, health and counseling, and Abby's House. By creating these connections and extending resources to student veterans, some of the barriers encountered by veterans returning to university were challenged. Outside organizations were also listed within the same document.

Even when direct collaborations between different programs were not occurring, the VRC established and maintained connections with other programs. One example of this is that some notable aspects of the VRC were modeled off of other organizations or programs at WOU.

The VRC was originally intended to foster community and to provide a system of peer mentorship similar to what other programs at WOU did. Dr. Steve Scheck, during his time as Provost, Vice President of Academic Affairs, collaborated with Bud Brown on the creation of the VRC. According to Dr. Scheck Bud Brown "campaigned...to provide a safe space for veterans," which manifested in community building and extending additional resources to veteran students. This practice of mentorship and guiding new veteran students has helped direct students towards different avenues for success.

The early program that would lead to the VRC, with a low budget, organized a trip to the National Guard Facility in Salem. At the National Guard Facility, when leaders discussed the purpose of the facility they'd been working on for a while without any considerable progress, members of the National Guard Facility were in full support of such a center. These interactions helped further lay the foundation for the connection between the WOU VRC and the National Guard Facility.

The VRC has also worked with the Student Veterans of America club and the Oregon Department of Veteran Affairs on various events and exhibits, both outside organizations. Within on-campus limits, opportunities such as the chance to do practicums with Abby's House strengthened the ways that the VRC sought connections with other programs and organizations.

Jandika Borden



The Veterans Resource Center has worked with many other organizations.

History of Veterans and Community

The Western Oregon University Veterans Resource Center is a community driven program for veterans and students alike. The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) is the perfect place for this mixing pot of backgrounds to grow. While the VRC helps both veterans and active-duty members of the military, they still openly accept family, friends, and fellow students to join in activities and build bridges between these groups. It would be during this time that Bud Brown, veteran and creator of the VRC, would be asked an important question, “Then he was being approached by family members of veterans of ‘I want to understand why my husband, why my wife, why my son, why my boyfriend, whatever, is the way they are. And I think if I take a course like this...’ And Bud polled all the veterans that were in a course, ‘Would they be upset if family members joined?’ and they said they wouldn't be.”

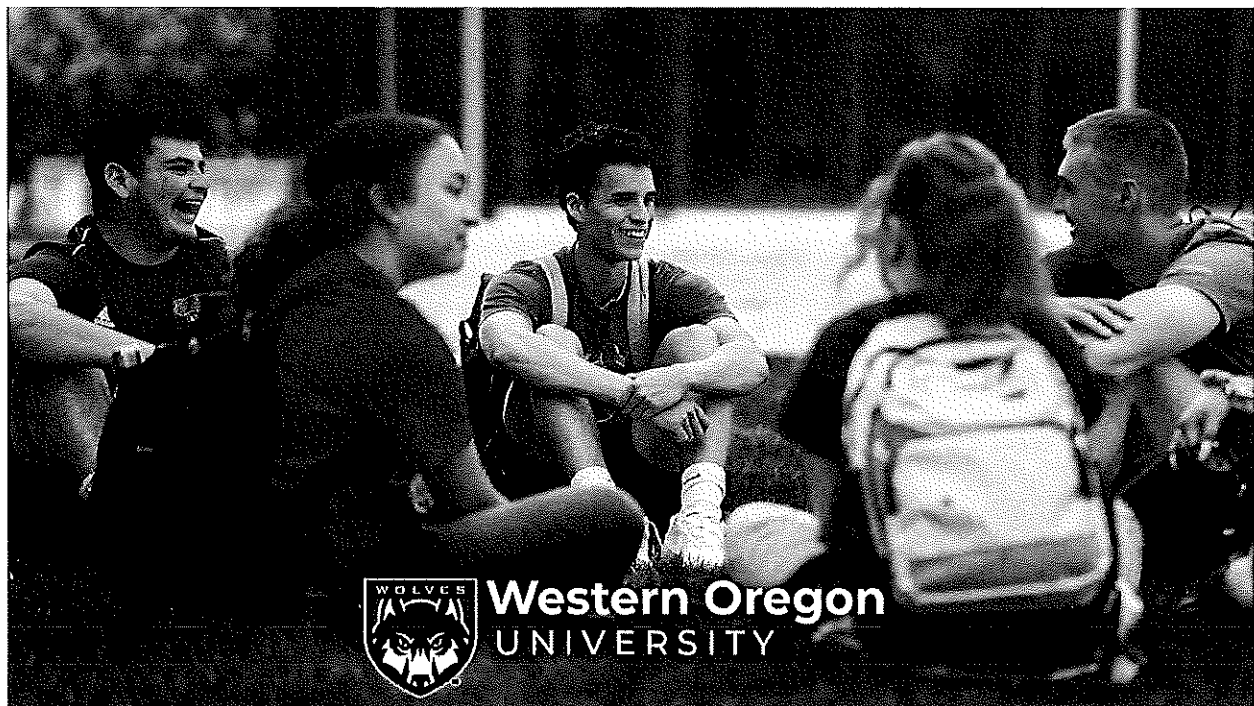
Sadly, Bud passed in 2022 but his groundwork in building a community for veterans paved the way for what we have today. From an interview with Professor Steve Scheck, Department Head of Biology, who was a close friend and colleague of Bud, he gave a personal background on how the VRC came to be. Bud was a Vietnam Veteran that while working at Western would work to help veterans grow a community together. While this veteran community would grow, it would originally be veteran only along with a course that helped in understanding what they went through.

In a 2023 oral history interview with Logan Doerfler, Director of the VRC, he states “Just stop by the VRC and get a free cup of coffee, hang out and just talk to some people.” This is the goal of the VRC when it comes to their community. Their community goes farther than just veterans and active-duty members but to the students of Western as well. Doerfler also ensured

to mentioned that “There’s a lot of student vets that come through there and we’re all pretty talkative, so love to just meet and chat with new people.”

Even online, Western promotes their mission as both building a communal environment and student success for veterans. The mission states, “The Western Oregon University Veterans Resource Center provides an environment that promotes retention and graduation of student veterans in post-secondary education through the coordination of services fostering academic, personal, and professional development.”

Benjamin Loverin



Western Oregon Students gathered sharing a laugh on the campus yard.
(From wou.edu Main page of Western University)

HST 408

Emma K. Cane

VRC Display Text

LEGACY AND THE GAPS OF THE GI BILL

Passed in 1944, the GI Bill covered the education costs of more than eight million World War II veterans between 1945 and 1956. Additionally, unemployment benefits, medical care coverage, and government-backed home loans were provided. Because the GI Bill has evolved by continuously changing its programs, what veterans could expect depended on who was in administration and which way the cultural pendulum swung. Budgetary restrictions were nonexistent in the 1990s, but in the early 2000s the belt tightened, and money again flowed after 9/11. Although the G.I. Bill Tuition Fairness Act of 2013 enacted changes that greatly benefited nonresident veteran students, one of the early goals of Bud Brown was to address the GI Bill's holes when, ironically, as the new legislation gave more opportunities for vet students to attend Western Oregon University, the percentage of vet drop-outs rose.

“This email is nothing more than a copycat version of university approaches to veteran issues around the country – which may explain the massive dropout rates of veterans attending universities under the new GI bill.”

The rising percentage of veteran students stimulated by the GI Bill couldn't make up for the fact that support was still lacking: education for veteran students on their current rights was the missing piece. Brown saw that this awareness could be fostered if veterans had the opportunity to talk amongst themselves in a private space dedicated to them. Brown continues:

“A club? A lounge? Maybe a fee can be charged for viewers interested in looking at the veterans inside. After all, we do make people pay before going into the zoo in Portland. If you

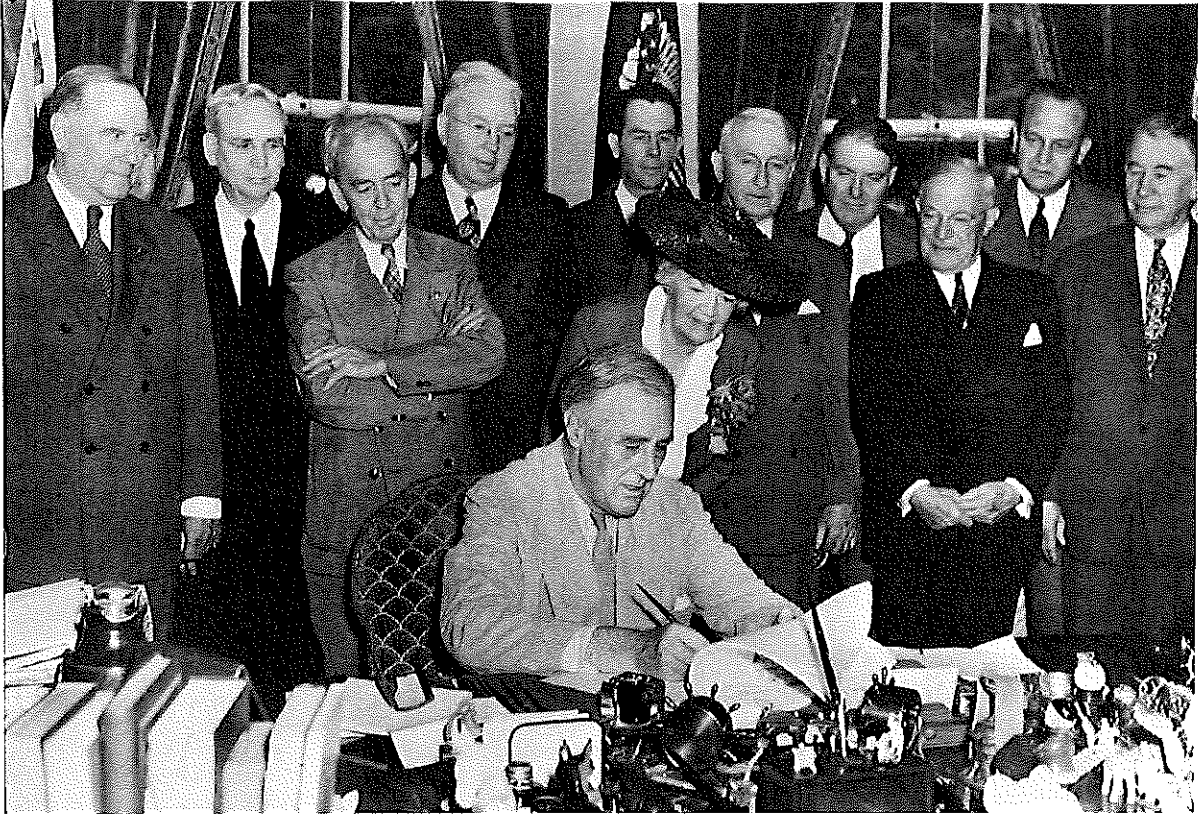
recall, ALL of the veterans in my reintegration classes have been opposed to this ‘tactic’ because they want to reintegrate into the student society – not be set out on display. Obviously, the email address sending this email out had to be approved at some administrative level. I can assure you one thing – as noted in the email – anyone who thinks that a veteran, or alleged veteran who brags about his deployments is going to have any credibility with most of our veteran students, well..... good luck.”

The Frankenstein nature of the GI Bill has offered certainty in fragments since its codification in the ‘40s. Thanks to the Veterans Resource Center that Bud Brown nurtured, it can be said that the community is no longer fragmented. With the ability to consult with mentors and opportunity to provide peer support, veteran students have a trustworthy source of information.

“I would say in the classroom a lot of veterans are very hesitant to share their experiences. Most veterans that are in the classroom are non-traditional students, they are usually a little bit older. Most, well not most, but some have families and they bring a lot of life experience to the table. So, I guess just like openness to kind of hear them out. There’s a lot of weird stigma when it comes to veterans, especially combat veterans, and that stuff is changing regularly but there’s a lot of hesitancy to share. But I think especially when you’re doing small group work, in those kinds of settings, you can draw out those experiences and just be willing to listen and entertain a new perspective would be really cool, but sometimes they’re hesitant to share because they don’t want to offend people.”¹

Emma K. Cane

¹ Logan Doerfler, interviewed by Carson Yon, Grace Smith, Stephanie McKenzie, and Ben Loverin, Monmouth, OR, October 30, 2023.



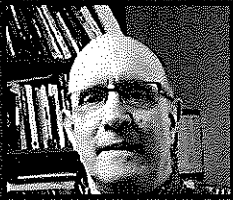
Franklin D. Roosevelt signing the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill) into law, June 1944. Image courtesy Wikimedia Commons.



The WOU Criminal Justice Department NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2012

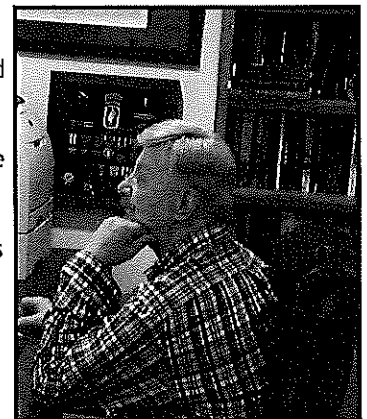
A Note From The Chair



Welcome to the Criminal Justice Department's first newsletter. We believe that this medium will be a great way to communicate with our students, alumni, and other interested parties about what is going on in criminal justice at Western. We hope that you agree and please feel free to give us any feedback or suggestions for future issues. For those of you who haven't heard from us in a while, you need to know that we are growing and changing. Starting fall term, 2012, we will have **eight** full-time, tenure-track faculty, after conducting two successful searches this past year—resulting in the hiring of Misty Weitzel and Scott Tighe—and also successfully converting Robert Swan's position to tenure track. We also have a new minor starting fall term—forensic anthropology—and are continuing to develop the crime analysis concentration. You may read about all of these developments and changes in the pages that follow. For now, please enjoy this newsletter and thank you for your interest in and support of the Criminal Justice Department at Western Oregon University.

A Look Inside The Classroom: Raising Awareness About Veterans' Issues

William Brown, PhD, a professor in the Criminal Justice Department at WOU and a Vietnam veteran, has introduced two classes during the past year that draw attention to veterans' issues. One class, *Veterans Entangled in Criminal Justice* (CJ 407), is a course that draws attention to the influence of the Military Total Institution (MTI) or military culture on veterans as they navigate through their resocialization process back into the civilian culture. This class examines the characteristics of individuals who have been exposed to on-the-ground war experiences and the hurdles confronting them in the civilian culture. The goal of this class is to familiarize those seeking careers in criminal justice with the social realities confronting veterans.

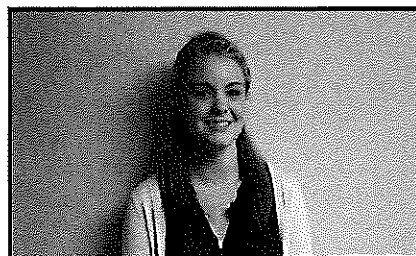


The second class, *Veteran Reintegration* (SSC 407), addresses issues related to veterans who have been exposed to war. Access to registration into this class requires verification that the student has been deployed to a combat area. This class is grounded on the premise that "veterans helping veterans" is a solution to the veteran reintegration problem. The primary goal of this class is to assist veterans in their resocialization process, which includes the university, relationships, and other factors related to veteran reintegration. One student currently enrolled in this class states,

This has been an invaluable course and should be highly recommended by all advisers who have veteran students at WOU. Returning vets need courses like this to not only help them integrate into the education system, but it will also help the local communities have a greater understanding of veterans' needs.

Many thanks to Dr. Brown for offering important classes like these and for his 10 years of service to the Criminal Justice Department and the WOU community!

Winner of New WOU CJ Practicum Scholarship Announced



The WOU Department of Criminal Justice is pleased to announce that Katlyn Miller has been selected as the first recipient of the new Criminal Justice Practicum Scholarship. Ms. Miller, a senior from Salem, will be completing her practicum with the Polk County Juvenile Department during the summer term. She will receive \$500 to put toward her practicum-related expenses. Congratulations Katlyn!

Please turn to page 2 for more information about the scholarship and how you can help.

Veteran Reintegration (SSC 407/507)
SPRING 2013
HWC 305
MONDAY - 4:30-8:20 PM

INSTRUCTOR: William Brown EMAIL brownw@wou.edu

OFFICE HOURS: (Maaske Hall, Room 215): MONDAY/TUESDAY 1:30 PM – 4:00 PM

Required Reading Material for Course: ¹

Worshipping the Myths of World War II, Edward W. Wood, Jr. Patomac Books, 2006

Kill Anything that Moves: The Real American War in Vietnam, Nick Turse, Metropolitan Books, 2013

Once a Warrior Always a Warrior, Charles W. Hoge, GPP Life, 2010

Shade it Black: Death and After in Iraq, Jess Goodell with John Hearn, Casemate

THE COURSE: Military deployment and combat experiences cannot be erased from memory. While there have been pharmacological efforts to develop medication that is capable of erasing the memories of experiences acquired in war – such medication may come to belittle the trauma of war. Some veterans learn to live productive lives drawing from and capitalizing on their military experiences – other veterans are not so fortunate. This class is designed to address military experiences and their relationship to reintegration issues confronting veterans who have been deployed to potential hostile or combat areas. This class will also address the impact of war experiences on significant others of veterans who have been exposed to war. Often, significant others (Spouses, Partners, Children, Close Friends) of veterans are the invisible victims of war.

This course addresses an assortment of cultural, psychological, and sociological problems – including the Military Total Institution – encountered by veterans as they process back into the civilian culture. Substance abuse, relationship issues, education, employment, permanent residency, criminal justice, and other issues relative to the problems many veterans are confronted with during their civilian reintegration process will be addressed.

War varies across international boundaries and time periods. But all wars are consistent in their purpose and outcome. War is about winning or losing. It is about death and living. War is about attrition and survival – war is about killing or being

¹ Additional reading material will be distributed to students for the purpose of information and assistance in developing reintegration plans.

killed. When wars *end* societies go back to *normal*. *SOME* societies tend to erase the impact of war on their own society. The media often glamorizes war by creating images of heroes in their Hollywood productions, while many veterans exposed to combat tend to restrict the classification of the heroes of war to only those who died in war. News media outlets often cover the progress of active wars as though they are keeping score in an athletic event. The actual pictures of dead and wounded are rarely included in the nightly news – the basic argument being that *the pictures or videos are too graphic for their viewing audience*.

Veterans from all generations – from Roman times to Afghanistan – return from war with the assumption that they will resume *normal* lives in the civilian culture. Some veterans appear to be successful in following through with that assumption. Other veterans are not so fortunate. Like it or not, everyone becomes products of their social environments and their individual experiences. No one returns home from a war the same person who left for war.

All wars are the product of politics – in most instances, failed politics. Exclusion of politics from the discussion of war and the outcomes of war denies everyone the opportunity to closely examine the confrontations veterans encounter when they return home. Therefore, it is appropriate to discuss the political arguments, motivations, and contradictions of war – as well as the political, economical, and human advantages and disadvantages of war in this class.

EXPECTATIONS/OUTCOMES:

The projected outcomes for students enrolled in this course include:

1. Understanding the concept *WAR*.
2. Understanding of the Military Total Institution and its influence on individuals.
3. Understand the linkage between the Military Total Institution and veteran reintegration.
4. Recognizing that many veterans live their post-military lives with much of the *baggage* they acquired in the military – some veterans are able to conceal much of this baggage in the civilian culture, while other veterans are not so fortunate.
5. Understanding the significance of civilian cultural adaptation and veteran reintegration.
6. Identification of problems germane to veterans as they attempt to reintegrate back into the civilian culture. The veteran who has left the military is not the same person who initially entered the military.
7. Recognizing and addressing external and internal veteran biases.
8. Learning to look forward, while recognizing the importance of referencing the past.
9. Resource availability and development.

10. Developing a REALISTIC Veteran Reintegration Plan Outline²

- All students will be required to read the assigned reading material for this class – that reading material must be integrated into class discussions.
- All students must respect the rights of other students to have and express individual opinions
- All students must back their opinions with factual information/data. That information may include personal experiences and/or confrontations but you are strongly encouraged to support those experiences with supporting factual information/data.
- All students must be aware that graphic images and language will appear in some of the films/documentaries presented during this class.
- Periodically, students will be called upon to offer their own insight/perceptions of specific topics. Those insights/perceptions will then become the focus of a broader classroom discussion – **ADVICE: BE PREPARED!**

STUDENT EVALUATION:

1. Class attendance and participation = 100 points
2. Veteran Reintegration Outline = 100 points

2 The Veteran Reintegration Plan outline must include: (1) Comprehensive statement of the problem (citing/referring to relevant material from assigned reading material), (2) explanation of required steps necessary for veterans to benefit from your plan (including your rationale for those steps), (3) specific existing hurdles that you anticipate veterans will/may encounter, (4) list of responsible parties (which range from significant others to government agencies to society in general), (5) how you propose to “sell” this plan to the public/government agencies, (6) a plan for follow up and evaluation of progress, and (7) the most likely changes you will have to make to the plan and how you intend to initiate those changes. **FORMAT:** Typed (Double-Spaced), references included at the end of document, and name on cover sheet. Pages? This is YOUR plan. Make certain that you fulfill all 7 requirements noted above.

Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY
powered by Google

Stephen Scheck <schecks@mail.wou.edu>

(no subject)

1 message

William Brown <brownw@mail.wou.edu>
To: Steve Scheck <schecks@wou.edu>

Sat, Nov 23, 2013 at 2:32 PM

Hi Steve,

Thanks for seeing us yesterday. I am working on the proposal. To clarify, I believe you asked for more specific details and a linkage from one area to another. Is that correct? Also, the inclusion of veteran family members as potential recipients/beneficiaries of the program (including Abby's House) should be addressed?

Now, for the "crazy" part of this email: I received a forwarded email from several faculty members and from Kyle. A copy of the email is below. There are a number of issues raised in this email. One interesting aspect of the email is that I did not receive it (I also checked my deleted email and I never received the email – does this mean I have been excluded?). It was addressed to all faculty and students – I think I am still a faculty member.

This email seems to be related to your warning yesterday during our meeting - competition. I still find it difficult to understand how or why there is competition for the veteran issue - for me it has always been about the veteran students.

This email is nothing more than a copycat version of university approaches to veteran issues around the country - which may explain the massive dropout rates of veterans attending universities under the new GI bill. A club? A lounge? Maybe a fee can be charged for viewers interested in looking at the veterans inside. After all, we do make people pay before going into the zoo in Portland. If you recall, ALL of the veterans in my reintegration classes have been opposed to this "tactic" because they want to reintegrate into the student society – not be set out on display. Obviously, the email address sending this email out had to be approved at some administrative level. I can assure you one thing – as noted in the email – anyone who thinks that a veteran, or alleged veteran who brags about his deployments is going to have any credibility with most of our veteran students, well..... good luck.

I assume this is related to student affairs..... I have been here at WOU since the beginning of the Iraq War. I have been watching veteran students go by the wayside during these years. I was at the University of Michigan-Flint and Wayne State University in the aftermath of Gulf War I. I witnessed that generation of veteran students churned up and spit out of those institutions. Where has WOU student affairs been since 2003? I am sure this is political – which is my weak suit. To me, this is a prime example of *cultural incompetence*. I know what the concept is – I have seen it applied in courtrooms for 6 years now, and in state committees across Oregon.

Please let me know if there is anything I need to do regarding this – beyond the revision or drafting of the proposal. Because I did not receive a copy of the email directly, I am wondering if I need to back out of this committee for political reasons? I have no problem working in the *shadows* if you think it would best serve the interests of this program. You know me well enough that I am not doing this for credit or recognition. I do not like or want recognition anyway. The recognition for this program should be directed to you and to Kyle Rodgers.

Final note: I have contacted someone I know back in Virginia. He is a Major in the Army – JAG officer. His permanent duty station is at Ft. Benning, GA but is in Virginia right now working as a military prosecutor in the USS Cole case. He has multiple publications regarding veteran reintegration issues/problems. We have been working together for several years now. I have asked him if he would consider being an outside reviewer for our program. Not surprisingly he said

yes. His contribution would not be political – although I am ignorant when it comes to politics – rather it would be a voice of cultural competence, which appears to be a problem we are confronted with right now. I assure you he is NOT a politician. As an independent reviewer he would be a valuable asset. He is MUCH MORE knowledgeable than the National Guard officers in Oregon that I have talked with. This would also assist in national recruitment as well. Yes, I know him very well – and he knows me. Please let me know if this is a problem because I do not want to have him commit to this and then, because of university politics, have to tell him I changed my mind. I am certain I can get a letter from him endorsing the program. He has invited me to go back to the Library of Congress this December for access to documents for the book I am working on – said he can find me a barracks to stay in for a couple days.

Thanks

Bud

HERE IS THE EMAIL (This is the copy I received from Kyle. The copies I received from faculty said to faculty@wou.edu)

From: WOU Veteran Student Liaison <wouveterans@wou.edu>

Date: November 22, 2013 at 12:02:47 PM PST

To: students@wou.edu

Subject: [All Students] NEW!!! WOU Veteran Student Liaison

WOU Students, Faculty, and Staff,

Hi, my name is Jerry and I am your new WOU Veteran Student Liaison! Although it says veteran in the title, I am here to work for everyone on campus from the newest student to our faculty and staff. My role here is to help veteran students have a successful educational experience however; I am here for faculty, staff, and students as well to understand what it means to be a veteran and how we can make all of our WOU experiences successful.

I am a vet that has served all over the world on deployments for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom to humanitarian relief in Haiti after the earthquake for Operation Unified Response.

I am also a Graduate School Student here at WOU in the Rehabilitation Counseling program. These experiences have made me uniquely qualified to answer many questions you may have from what I experienced in different countries to why does my vet friend talk funny when she says we are meeting at 1300. Also I can let you know where vets can go here on campus to process GI bill benefits and resources for help in a successful transition into civilian life.

As a WOU student veteran what are some things that you would like to see at WOU?

Would you be interested in a WOU Veterans Club that meets to discuss issues you are having at school or in life?

What would you think of having a veterans lounge or defined space on campus? What might this look like? What would you want to see there?

These are a few of my ideas that I would like to get started, however I need to have some support behind these ideas to help them become a reality. If you would like to see these ideas come true send me an e-mail at WOUveterans@wou.edu saying I would like a club, lounge, or something else altogether. Sending an email does not mean you have to volunteer hours of your time. It only means this is something you would use and make your time at WOU more enjoyable. I look forward to hearing from you.

Jerry Langholz

WOU Veteran Student Liaison

wouveterans@wou.edu

(503) 838-9229



Major Evan R. Seamone, U.S. Army
1544 Spring Hill Road
No. 9663
McLean, VA 22102
eseamone@yahoo.com
(520) 234-7104

Steve Scheck, Ph.D.
Vice President, Academic Affairs
Western Oregon University
345 N. Monmouth Ave
Monmouth, OR 97361

November 30, 2013

Dear Dr. Scheck:

My name is Evan R. Seamone. I am an active duty Army prosecutor currently assigned to the Pentagon. In my personal capacity, I have published in a number of areas relating to the intersection between combat and operational stress and the law, including treatment-based sentencing alternatives for veteran offenders, VA benefits for survivors of military sexual trauma and veterans with less-than-honorable discharges, and improved methods for judges to evaluate child custody cases involving veteran parents with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. I am the editor of a special edition of the *Family Court Review*, which is devoted to military families and the law, and I am just now completing a book to help correctional administrators understand the special treatment needs of incarcerated veterans. I have included a CV with this letter to provide a description of these various projects.

Recently, I had an opportunity to learn about the Western Oregon University Veteran Success Center concept and the vital role that the Center will play as a comprehensive resource for veteran students, prospective students, and veterans in the community. The program represents an ideal platform to deliver the type of targeted support required for veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Center is a necessary method to respond to the lessons that academic institutions are now learning about the additional obstacles facing students in this very vulnerable category. Deans and professors have begun to recognize how the university experience can be either a catapult to successful reintegration or the greatest obstacle in its path. With few clear answers, this program has emerged as a proactive tool to maximize the university experience.

Without a comprehensive and organized approach to address the experiences that are common to this small segment of students, the university can become yet another place where veteran students feel compelled to adopt a defensive posture as misunderstood *outsiders*. History and political science instructors often witness as veterans use their classes to make sense of their own combat experiences. Without proper guidance, such students can unintentionally impair the objectives of the entire class.

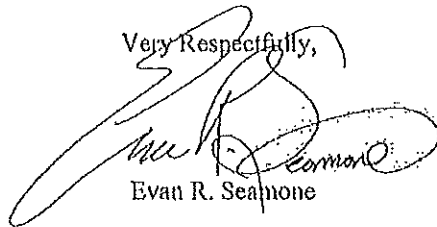
Often such quagmires result from the lack of effective guidance and direction in reintegration from academic channels. Similarly, veteran students run the risk of overburdening themselves with multiple classes and multiple jobs in an effort to fill their lives with activity. For veteran students, such self-sabotage may represent an unguided effort to stay on-edge and replicate certain combat conditions. These and related phenomena may explain why recent veterans across the Nation are discontinuing academic studies.

The Veteran Success Center's proactive posture embraces the special realities facing veteran students and creates a web of support that is capable of sustaining these students both on and off campus. Research consistently demonstrates the vital function of social support networks among persons with similar experiences as an accelerant for recovery from Posttraumatic Stress and other trauma-related conditions. With the ability to drop by the Center on an ongoing basis and consult with mentors in the community, the veteran student can receive input from different trusted sources when contemplating life's challenges. Furthermore, the veteran student enjoys a continued sense of service to society by providing peer support and participating in orientations for future students. These hallmarks enable veterans to tap into the same sense of mission, purpose, service, and respect that sustained them through the toughest times.

For the above reasons, I fully support the development of the WOU Veteran Success Center, which would undoubtedly serve as a model for other universities across the Nation. If there is any way that I could contribute to the program in a manner that would not conflict with an extremely packed trial schedule, it would be my great honor.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Evan R. Seamone", written over a circular stamp or seal. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Evan R. Seamone

WOU Veterans Program
Outside Review Board Members

George Amiotte: Director of Education for Veterans for the Oglala Sioux tribe and Special Advisor to the President of the Oglala Sioux tribe on Veterans Affairs.

Bart Bolger, Veterans for Peace (VFP), Corvallis, Oregon. Former president of VFP, Corvallis, OR, U.S. Naval Officer (Ret.)

Wille Elfering: Veterans Representative Oregon Employment Department, Salem, OR

Mike Hastie, Veterans for Peace (VFP), Portland, OR. Vietnam Veteran, Medic.

Evan Seamone (Major, U.S. Army): Office of Chief Prosecutor for Military Commissions, Washington, DC. Previous positions include Chief of Military Justice, Ft. Benning, GA; Assistan Professor, U.S. Army Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School, Charlottesville, VA.

Robert Stanulis, PhD: Licensed Neuropsychologist, Licensed Forensic Psychologist, Portland, OR

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UNIVERSITY
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Stephen Scheck <schecks@mail.wou.edu>

Re: Last Week

1 message

William Brown <brownw@mail.wou.edu>
To: Stephen Scheck <schecks@wou.edu>

Mon, Jan 20, 2014 at 9:07 AM

Hi Steve,

I really do not care about recognition - I tend to like the "below the radar flight path." My concern is the vet students and I think the university should do this and collect all of the credit. Back on topic, I am including a couple paragraphs in the chapter I am writing about vet education. One media source I am citing is by David Wood (2012). He does a good job discussing the problem. See attached. Another article I found - desk is a mess - one professor back East said it is true that many veterans drop out. He tried an experiment in a chemistry class. He selected only vets to be in one class. The result - veterans scores exceeded civilian student scores. My guess is that these types of "experiments" would increase retention??

Thanks

Bud

On Sun, Jan 19, 2014 at 6:17 PM, Stephen Scheck <schecks@wou.edu> wrote:

Bud,

We'll play a lot of this by ear...and the seat of our pants. Somehow I do wish to get you appropriately recognized for the service you are contributing.

Steve

On Sun, Jan 19, 2014 at 6:12 PM, William Brown <brownw@mail.wou.edu> wrote:

Yes, I am aware of that. However, I assumed I would be able to have the overload (or at least a partial overload) this Spring and break him in. From that point, I would simply be an advisor/assistant for him. Is that OK? I am hoping that he will be able to offer the course 3 quarters per year.

On Sun, Jan 19, 2014 at 3:48 PM, Stephen Scheck <schecks@wou.edu> wrote:

Bud,

I'm working on the final lap in the mile run of getting the funding in place for starting the veterans initiative here. I'm still looking for February start--Ideally, Feb 3.

Also, so you're fully aware; part of the horse trading I'm engaged in with President Weiss is that the start-up costs would be reduced by having Kyle facilitate the veterans reintegration seminar rather than having you on overload to do it. I know this will functionally require you to do mentoring "out-of-hide" with Kyle...and I appreciate it, Bud.

Steve

On Sun, Jan 19, 2014 at 3:33 PM, William Brown <brownw@mail.wou.edu> wrote:

Hi Steve,

Just wanted to inform you that I took Kyle Rodgers to a defense attorney conference. He was a "last-minute" appointed panel member. He did a remarkable job. In my opinion, better than all the other panel members - yes, including me. I truly believe he is going to be bringing a significant number of young veterans to WOU. He is very direct, forthright, and honest. Nearly 40 attorneys virtually sat up and listened to everything he said - did not see one attorney texting while he spoke! :-). He was surrounded by attorneys and two former judges for at least 15 minutes after the session was over.

WOU Veteran Success Center Draft of Veteran Center Functions

The WOU Veteran Success Center is a university program designed to provide assistance to veteran students and family members of veterans. This program will also provide assistance and information to WOU faculty and staff, as well as non-veteran students who have questions or concerns regarding veterans or veteran issues.

Veteran students carry with them the baggage from their experiences in the military culture. Many of these students have been deployed to combat areas of operation. The experiences and memories they acquired in a combat area often cannot be discarded. For many veterans the baggage they currently carry will accompany throughout their lives. The WOU Veteran Success Center will assist these veterans in learning how to live with experiences and memories of their past, and be successful in their pursuit of a university degree and post-university occupations.

The WOU Veteran Success Center will develop working relationships with WOU academic and support services that will assist in the removal of barriers/problems that many veterans encounter during their reintegration process into the university environment. Some of these support services include Admissions, Registrar, Student Affairs, Health and Counseling, Abby's House, etc.

- **Hours of Operation:**
 - The WOU Veteran Success Center will operate from 9 AM – 5 PM (Monday-Friday). Some of the operation time will include performing necessary functions outside the physical office – for example, attending university and community meetings. Hours and days of open office availability could be increased through the use of student interns, volunteers, and work-study grant recipients. This would also allow for increased involvement with community organizations and events. The schedule will be based on one full-time employee.
- **College Prep 101:**
 - This would be a short presentation period for prospective student veterans or those early in their college career, focusing on the basics of transitioning into college. It would focus on the steps required to gain admission and graduate, as well as programs specific to veterans, including the GI Bill, Tuition Assistance, and Vocational Rehab. Collaboration with admissions, advising, and the veteran services officer in the Registrar's office would be necessary.

- **Study/Performance Tactics:**
 - This would be a presentation/discussion group focused on methods to improve classroom performance in the classroom and study habits outside the classroom. These tactics will be useful for both in and out of class, with particular emphasis on overcoming the symptoms of problems germane to many veterans who have been deployed to combat areas. Collaboration with Disability Services may be essential.
- **Reintegration Class:**
 - Veteran Reintegration is a 4 credit Social Science discussion class focusing on the issues negatively affecting military veterans, family members of veterans, and students with a desire/interest to learn more about veterans. It would be offered to all students, with an emphasis on breaking down cultural barriers between all groups. This class is currently taught through the Social Science Division by Dr. William Brown, but will soon be transitioned to the responsibility of the WOU Veteran Success Center Director.
- **Faculty Discussion:**
 - This is a time period set aside for faculty and staff to drop in with any questions or concerns they may have related to military veterans in their classroom, or issues related to veterans in general. Faculty discussion time can also be extended to Division meetings.
- **Student Veteran Support Group:**
 - This is a drop-in discussion group designed as a safe environment for student veterans to discuss issues affecting their success in the classroom, such as triggering discussions related to war or other cultural differences in the classroom. This is not a mental health counseling session, but rather an opportunity for student veterans to connect with each other.
- **Individual casework:**
 - This will be the primary focus of the center during regular business hours. The purpose will be to address veterans on a case-by-case basis. Contact will be calculated and monitored through a counseling database for follow-up or referral. In-person drop-ins will be asked to sign in each time they enter the center. Phone calls and email responses will be logged into an individual consultation database as well. Contact information will be maintained in the center in order to refer veterans to both on-campus or off-campus services, such as veteran services officer's through the Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs to assist in application for health benefits, or the registrar's office to certify enrollment under the GI Bill.
- **Community Outreach:**
 - There are several opportunities within the surrounding community to engage veterans that may have interest in utilizing their GI Bill benefits, but do not know where or how to get started. Preliminary contact with these organizations has already resulted in eager interest in the WOU Veteran Success Center. Following is a list of these organizations:
 - *Battle Buddies:*
 - This is a weekly luncheon offered to veterans at the Salem VFW every Thursday from 11-2pm.
 - *Marion County Veteran Court:*
 - This is a diversionary program for selected criminal justice involved veterans. Judge Day has already shown an interest in the WOU program.

- *Oregon State Prison Veteran Club:*
 - This club has over 130 members, many of which are honorably discharged veterans, eligible for GI Bill or Vocational Rehab benefits upon their release.
- *Oregon National Guard Transition Assistance Program:*
 - This is the organization responsible for assisting National Guard members in their transition from military service back to civilian life.
- *Greater Salem Area Veteran Organizations:*
 - This is a collaborative, monthly meeting that includes the major veteran service organizations within the Willamette Valley. The purpose is to network among the various organizations in order to maximize resources.
- *Marion County Local Alcohol and Drug Planning Committee (MCLADPC):*
 - This is a monthly meeting of local leaders in alcohol and drug treatment, as well as professionals that focus on reintegration for incarcerated persons. This committee has expressed interest in the WOU program, and would like to hear a presentation of what the program has to offer in order to refer veterans that may be interested in attending college.
- *Student Veterans of America:*
 - This is a national organization that offers charters to on-campus veteran service organizations, as well as interactive, online training for student veterans and faculty.
- Other local veteran organizations include the *Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)*, *Oregon Paralyzed Veterans of America (OPVA)*, the *American Legion*, *Disabled Veterans of America (DVA)*, *Serving Our Veterans At Home (SOVAH)*, *Oregon Department of Veteran Affairs (ODVA)*, *Salem Veteran Center*, and the VA's *Veteran Justice Outreach* program.
- Other:
 - Because recruitment is an issue that needs to be addressed, time must be set aside for this task. Adjustment to basic scheduling may indeed become necessary. Additionally, important outreach meetings may also require scheduling adjustments.

"Honoring the Memory of William Bud Brown"

By Randall G. Shelden

Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice

April 19, 2022

Online at: <https://www.cjcj.org/news/blog/honoring-the-memory-of-william-bud-brown>

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." — Winston Churchill

"Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail." — Ralph Waldo Emerson

"The time is always right to do what is right." — Martin Luther King, Jr.

The words of these famous men fit the life lived by one of my best friends, Willam B. Brown (1945–2022). He was known as Bud to everyone. It was his middle name. Bud and I first met in the early 1980's when he took one of my criminal justice classes at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). We soon became the best of friends and I helped guide him through all the challenges of the academic world. After graduating with a degree in social work, Bud became a graduate student in the sociology department where he earned both an MA and PhD. While he was a graduate student he took a theory class and one of the assignments was to write about a theorist. The professor wrote the names of several of the theorists on small pieces of paper and put them in a coffee can. Bud pulled out one with the name of Richard Quinney. He learned that I was familiar with Quinney's work and had met him in person. Bud came to me asking for help. I gave him Quinney's phone number and said he should call him. Bud was surprised but he called Quinney. They talked for quite a while and Quinney sent him several of his publications. They became lifelong friends.

From left to right, William Bud Brown (1945–2022), Randall Shelden and Richard Quinney pose with wide smiles in front of a luscious green lawn.

After receiving his PhD at UNLV, Bud became a professor at Wayne State University in Detroit and later at the University of Michigan-Flint. Eventually he ended up at Western Oregon University. Over the ensuing years we collaborated on several writing projects, including two books. One was called, "Youth Gangs in American Society" (now in its 4th edition) and the other an introductory criminal justice text called, "Crime and Criminal Justice in American Society" (now in its 2nd edition). We also collaborated on a study of jail overcrowding in Las Vegas.

Bud did his most important work dealing with veterans, and he published several articles on veterans in the criminal justice system. He also focused on veterans in the Vietnam War in particular. Bud was in the army stationed in Vietnam. That experience was hard on him and left a lasting impression. Twenty years after he was released, he

made his first of several trips to Vietnam. He felt guilty about what we did over there. He published an article called "Reconciliation in a Back-Alley Cafe of Saigon" where he wrote about making peace with the past. On one of his subsequent trips he donated his medals to the War Remnants Museum in Saigon. What he wrote on the plaque is very revealing: "I was wrong. I am sorry."

Over the years he shared many stories about his experiences in Vietnam. These experiences left him with an intense hatred of war and especially this war. He channeled this feeling into many solid contributions to peace. He became involved as a consultant with what he and fellow soldier Kyle Rodgers called the "Bunker Project." They were hired by defense attorneys and family members of veterans who were defendants in the criminal justice system. He had several articles on the subject published in CJCJ's Justice Policy Journal.

Bud was more than the work he did. In all my life I never met anyone who was as kind and honest as Bud. Everyone who has ever known him would describe him as genuine. He created his own path as Emerson said. He always did what was right as Martin Luther King said. And as Winston Churchill said, Bud made a life by what he gave.

I have so many memories of the times we spent together and the times we spent talking on the phone. I have never been one who spent a lot of time talking on the phone. With Bud, there was no such thing as a short phone call, as they almost always lasted at least an hour and many times more. There was a standing joke between my wife and I about the times he would call and leave a message on our home phone. He would always say "Hey Randy, this is Bud." He would often say the same thing when he left a message on my cell phone.

I'm going to miss him. As I write these words I am still grieving and have tears in my eyes – tears that have come more than once since I heard of his death.