***Be Culturally Sensitive***

*Student veterans are a highly diverse group—as diverse as America itself. But there are some helpful Veteran Basics that support our student Vets. Here are some guidelines (but every Vet is different):*

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| ***What Not to Say to a VET…***  • What was going to war like?  • Did you see anyone die?  • Did you kill anyone?  • Would you go back?  • How was Iraq/Afghanistan?  • How did you get injured?  • Are you opposed to the war?  • Are you okay (mentally)?  • That must have been hard...  • Thank you for what you did.  • Did you lose any friends?  • Are you traumatized?  • Are you brain-injured?  • Are you experiencing PTSD?  • These wars were atrocities and a waste of human life  • I don’t get why you’re having so much trouble—you volunteered, right?  • Did anyone shoot at you? | ***What to Say….***  • “Thank you for serving”  • “Thank you for your service to our country”  • “Welcome back”  • How are you?  • How are you enjoying school?  • Did you know we have a Student Veteran Center on campus?  ***Ask questions that can get factual answers:***  – When did you get back?  – What unit were you with?  – What branch of the service are you/were you in?  • ***Don’t Pry.***  • If they don’t want to talk don’t push it.  • Don’t go overboard in praise or thanks to the veteran. |

***BE CONSCIOUS OF WHAT YOU SAY AND DO***

An instructor flippantly told her students that if they didn't finish their work she would line them up against the wall and shoot them. *--In Iraq, this veteran came upon the scene of a mass execution by the Government of Iraq done in this method.*

As an assignment in an art class, an instructor had her art students bring to mind a painful memory- think about it- feel your emotions again- what do you see or smell? Now, draw a picture of the event. *--This assignment put the veteran in a state of fear and distress. He said “There is a reason we bury those memories so deep.”*

A veteran had been injured by an IED in Iraq and his buddies were killed. When he returned a fellow student asked him how he lost his leg.  *--This brought back the memories and pain of the blast and loss of buddies. The veteran said he did not know why he lived and his buddies died. It wasn’t right, he said. I should have died too*