A Campus-wide Approach: Access for College Students with Mental Health Disabilities

Indiana AHEAD Conference
April 1, 2016

Barbara Blacklock, MA, LISW
Disability Resource Center, University of Minnesota
Agenda

• Overview

• Part 1
  – Welcoming
  – Identifying
  – Accommodating
  – Educating

• Part 2
  – Environmental Change
• How many of you know someone who has struggled with the symptoms of a mental illness? (e.g. depression, anxiety, post traumatic stress disorder, eating disorder)

• How many of you know someone with a mental illness who is professionally successful?
What are some characteristics of those individuals you know who are professionally successful and have a mental illness?
Myths and Facts

1. Half of all college students report feeling so depressed they have trouble functioning.
2. 23% of freshman come to campus with mental health diagnosis.
3. 5% of freshman come to campus on psychotropic medications.
4. The most common barrier for students with mental health disabilities is stigma.
5. Most college students think others will think less about them if they seek mental health treatment.
Mental Illness Affects School Performance

Over Half Report Negative Impact on School Performance
Less than Half of Depressed Students are Receiving Treatment
Major depressive disorder is the leading cause of disability among Americans age 15 to 44. Majority, even those with the most severe depression, can get better with treatment. Medications, psychotherapies, and other methods can effectively treat people with mental illness.
The National Institute on Mental Health

- The earlier that treatment can begin, the more effective it is
- There are many barriers to seeking treatment
  - Stigma
  - Access
  - Lack of awareness
- Onset of most serious mental illnesses begin between ages 18-24
Why Should we be Concerned?

*When health is absent, wisdom cannot reveal itself, art cannot manifest, strength cannot fight, wealth becomes useless and intelligence cannot be applied.*

Herophilus of Chalcedon
Negative Impacts
Who are we working with?
Welcoming

- Art/Posters
- Syllabus statements
  - Mental Health
  - DRC
- Provide examples of disability conditions (Ensure mental health disabilities is included)
- Follow-up on missed appointments
- Student groups
  - Active Minds
  - NAMI on-campus
Mental Health Syllabus Statement

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student’s ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via www.mentalhealth.umn.edu

Developed by Provost’s Committee on Student Mental Health 2006
Endorsed by Senate Committee on Educational Policy 2009
DRC Syllabus Statement

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing all students equal access to learning opportunities. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- Students who have, or think they may have, a disability (e.g. mental health, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, or systemic) are invited to contact DRC to arrange a confidential discussion at 612 626-1333 (V/TTY)

- Students registered with DRC, who have a letter requesting accommodations, are encouraged to contact the instructor early in the semester to discuss accommodations outlined in their letter

Additional information is available at the DRC website: https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/home
Welcoming

• Other ideas?

Identify two additional ideas for creating a welcoming office environment for students with mental health disabilities.
Identifying

• Listen for examples of mental health challenges
  – Problems with sleep
  – Concentration changes
  – Significant losses
  – Flat affect, lack of interest

• New student orientation
  – Make sure mental health resources/supports are represented.
  – Normalize help-seeking
Identifying

• Ensure departments know how to refer to the Disability Resource Center (DRC)
  – Have presentations from DRC staff
  – Have words and examples ready ahead of time

• Be aware of community resources students can access or know who on campus has that information

• Other?
Accommodating

• When does a mental health condition become a disability?
  – Diagnosis from the American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fifth Edition
  – Symptoms significantly interfere with a major life activity
Life Activities

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Concentrating
- Thinking
- Learning
- Communicating

- Working
- Motivation
- Stress Management
- Managing Distractions
- Self-care
Accommodating

• Student’s input and medical documentation determine if student has a disability

• Documentation
  – Current dx
  – Describes how student is impacted
  – Identifies side effects of medication
  – Optional: Recommends accommodations
Accommodating

• On a case-by-case basis
• An individual assessment
• An interactive process
Interactive Process

Student

Disability Resources

Faculty
Accommodating

• Barriers to learning/working/participating
  – Course specific barriers
• Communication to faculty
• Same benefits/experiences as peers
• Does not place undue burden on the student
Common Conditions

• Major Depressive Disorder
• Anxiety Disorders
  – Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
  – Generalized Anxiety Disorder
  – Panic Disorder
  – Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
Common Accommodations

- Reduced course load
- Private test environment
- Extra test time
- Modified deadlines
- Modified schedule

- Modified attendance
- Notetaker
- Priority seating
- Extra feedback
- Financial aid adjustments
Modified Attendance

- Modification of attendance requirements may be reasonable given the impacts of the student’s disability. This accommodation is not intended to waive the academic requirements of attendance in your course. Please review, consider and enforce attendance policies consistent with the demands of the essential requirements of your course. For example, in many cases when this accommodation is needed a modification of 1-3 additional absences may be reasonable. Whenever possible, the student should initiate a discussion about modified attendance prior to a disability-related absence. I am available to consult with you and this student about the reasonableness of any modifications of attendance in your course.
How is this accommodation working on your campus?
Less Common Accommodations

• Service Animals

• Emotional Support Animals
  – Local ordinances
  – Fair Housing
    • The existence of a disability
    • Relationship between the disability and the relief the animal provides
    • The need for the animal in order for the student to use or enjoy on-campus residence
    • Be clear regarding student responsibilities
Educating: Students

- The Jed Foundation
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- NAMI On-campus
- Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
- MentalHealth.gov
- The National Institute on Mental Health
- Active Minds
- Campus Specific Information
  www.mentalhealth.umn.edu
Educating

• Campus partners
  – Counseling, Health Center, Sexual Violence Center
  – International Student and Scholars Office
  – Learning Abroad
  – Registration
  – Judicial Affairs
• Provide cross-training
• Formal liaison relationships
What is your campus doing to...

• Educate
  – Students
  – Faculty
  – Other departments?
Removing Barriers
Changing the Environment
Which environmental barriers are you aware of on your campus?
What is the primary barrier on your campus?

1. Stigma and stereotypes
2. Complex nature of mental health disabilities
3. Organizational and institutional barriers
4. Limited student resources and insurance
5. Limited access to information and services
6. Other:
Create environments conductive to seeking help and develop culturally appropriate messages to de-stigmatize mental illness and mental health treatment.
What is your campus doing to:

Create an environment that is conductive to seeking help and developing culturally appropriate messages to de-stigmatize mental illness and mental health treatment?
Student Mental Health
What is the message on your campus?

1. Student mental health is a private individual issue.
2. Mental health is not an academic issue.
3. Student mental health is a campus-wide issue.
4. Student mental health is not a disability issue.
5. Students with mental illness need to take medical leaves and return to campus when they are symptom-free.

6. Other:
Our Previous Message

Student mental health is a private, individual issue. We have a number of helpful resources, if you can find them.
Current Message

Student mental health is a campus-wide public health issue; faculty, staff and students are all affected by student mental health and are part of the solution in addressing these issues.
How did we get there?
Research to Practice

https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/educationandtraining/

Provost’s Committee on Student Mental Health
2005 - present
Charge to the Committee

• Raise awareness about student mental health
• Affect policy change
• Improve conditions on our campus for students with mental health disabilities
• Serve as a model for campus collaboration
Committee Members

- Academic Advising Network
- Academy of Distinguished Teachers
- Athletics
- Boynton Health Promotions
- Boynton Mental Health Clinic*
- Center for Educational Innovation
- Disability Resource Center*
- Department of Psychiatry
- Office for Equity and Diversity

- Graduate School
- Housing and Residential Life
- International Student and Scholar Services
- Office for Student Affairs
- Police and Emergency Management
- Student Counseling Services
- Student Members from:
  - Active Minds
  - MSA
  - COGS
  - PSO
Public Health Approach to Student Mental Health
Systematic
Crisis Information

Crisis / Urgent Consultation

Available on campus Monday-Friday, 8:00-4:30

No appointment is needed to speak with a counselor for an urgent need.

If you are in a life-threatening emergency, call 911.

Or for 24-hour phone counseling, call the Crisis Connection: (612) 379-6363.

Essential Numbers

Boynton Health Service Mental Health Clinic
(612) 624-1444

University Counseling & Consulting Services
(612) 624-3323

Disability Services
(612) 626-1333

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)
(612) 626-7100

Events

Attending events—like "Stressing" Academic Success—is one of many ways to get involved and raise awareness about mental health and stress management resources on campus.

President Kaler

University of Minnesota President Eric Kaler
discusses available mental health and stress resources.
Go to

www.mentalhealth.umn.edu
Marketing the Site

Complete a 3 question quiz for a chance to win $1,000!

Go to www.mentalhealth.umn.edu

Starts February 5. Deadline for clicking is February 16, 2007. Contest open to all University of Minnesota Twin Cities students. Each student may only enter once.

Sponsored by:
Collaborative Training
Welcome to the Student Mental Health Module

This module supplements the extensive material found at www.mentalhealth.umn.edu by providing actual practice in faculty-student dialogs and making mental health referrals.

Learning Objectives

By completing the module, you will be able to:

- Effectively identify students who may have mental health concerns
- Effectively engage students in conversation to better understand their concerns, and assist them in seeking solutions
- Determine and share with students the most appropriate resources.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
© 2009 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All Rights Reserved.
Mental Health Syllabus Statement

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via www.mentalhealth.umn.edu.

Developed and endorsed by the Provost’s Committee on Student Mental Health, June 2006
Approved by the Senate Committee on Educational Policy, June 2009
'Stressing' Academic Success: When Life Gets in the Way

A Day of Conversations Leading to Actionable Solutions

The Provost's Committee on Student Mental Health hosted the forum "Stressing" Academic Success: When Life Gets in the Way, on May 19, 2014.

The forum provided a way for campus community stakeholders to address our grand challenge: To create a University environment where students, faculty and staff can thrive and reach their full academic potential.

Nearly 200 University leaders, faculty, staff and students representing academic and administrative units and student organizations participated.

The number of bold ideas, strategies and action plans generated to address stress, mental health and foster success was remarkable. We look forward to further contributions of expertise, energy and perspective as we move forward.

View the "Stressing" Academic Success video.

Photo Gallery
Mental Health Forums

May 2014
Stressing Academic Success: When Life Gets in the Way

October 2015
Continuing the Conversation

• 200 University faculty, staff and students attended day-long event
• Used participatory leadership to build on what we have done
• Goal: To envision a university environment where students, staff and faculty can thrive and reach their full potential
• Identified Bold Ideas to Address
Cirque de-Stress

Back by popular demand! Cirque de-Stress returns to Coffman Union’s Great Hall on October 22, 2013, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Get Involved, Be Informed

Between performances you can balance a peacock feather, juggle, ride a unicycle, attempt yo-yo tricks, and visit therapy animals—including a chicken! Flex your mental muscles at tables featuring stress reduction and mental health resources available through the Provost’s Committee on Student Mental Health, Boynton Health Service, University Counseling and Consulting Services, the Center for Spirituality and Healing, the Aurora Center, the Fitness / Wellness program at Recreational Sports, Active minds, the Rothenberger Institute, the Department of Psychology, the Animal Assisted Interactions program at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, the Disabled Student Cultural Center, and others.
PET AWAY WORRY AND STRESS PAWS

Weekly access to therapy animals.
Finding Harmony...
POLICY STATEMENT
Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences
Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include illness of the student or his or her dependent, medical conditions related to pregnancy, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances also include activities sponsored by the University if identified by the senior academic officer for the campus or his or her designee as the basis for excused absences. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. Instructors are expected to accommodate students who wish to participate in party caucuses, pursuant to Board of Regents resolution.
Winner of the 2015
Active Minds
Healthy Campus Award
Celebrating Excellence in Student Health & Wellness
Campus Approach

Reactive
• Problem based
• Individual accommodations
• Responds to campus fear and promotes internalized stigma
• Operates in a silo

Proactive
• Planful
• Reduction of environmental barriers and individual accommodations
• Promotes reduction of internal and external stigma
• Promotes campus-wide collaboration
Your Campus

Does your campus take a reactive or proactive approach to student mental health?

1 2 3 4 5

Reactive Proactive
Campus Collaboration is Essential

- Allows sharing of resources
- Attainment of mutual goals or outcomes
- Expands reach
- Creates change
Successful Collaboration

• Mutually agreed upon framework, goals, & objectives
• Mutual respect
• Trust
• Diverse perspectives
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE OCTOBER 1, 2014

56 Colleges & Universities Join The Jed & Clinton Health Matters Campus Program to Support Student Mental Health

Schools Nationwide Commit to Assess and Enhance Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Suicide Prevention Programming

THE JED & CLINTON HEALTH MATTERS

CAMPUS PROGRAM

NEW YORK, NY, October 1, 2014—The Jed Foundation and The Clinton Foundation Health Matters Initiative today announced that over 55 colleges and universities have joined The Jed & Clinton Health Matters Campus Program (The Campus Program) in support of student wellbeing and mental health. The program is designed to help schools prevent the two leading causes of death in young adults[1],—accidents, including those caused by prescription drug overdoses or alcohol poisoning, and suicide.

The Campus Program, which launched in June 2014, is designed to help colleges and universities assess and enhance mental health, substance abuse, and suicide prevention programming.

Participating schools make a four-year commitment to work with The Campus Program to evaluate and identify opportunities to augment these activities on campus. The Campus Program provides schools with a framework for supporting student mental health, as well as assessment tools, feedback reports and ongoing technical assistance from The Campus Program team. The Jed Foundation and Clinton Health Matters Initiative are honored to work with these schools in their efforts to promote the emotional wellbeing and mental health of their students. To date, participating schools include:

Alfred University
Aurora University
Azusa Pacific University
Barnard College
Boston University
Butler University
California Institute of Technology
California State University - Chico
Cameron University
Benefits of a Campus-wide Committee

- A coordinated system of delivering mental health services to students
- A coordinated system of mental health resources that provides support for faculty and staff
- Implementation of campus wide strategies to reduce stigma
- Proactive response to campus issues
- Increase in number of campus allies
Unexpected Benefits

- Collaboration on campus-wide training
- Policy change
- Access to multiple audiences
- Donated resources
- More effective referrals
- Tools for the Administration to use in crisis
- Access to key stakeholders for student organizations
- Reduction of duplication of services
- Clarifying and strengthening of campus partnerships
Building a Vibrant Committee

- Provost appointed
- Co-chairs
- Regular meeting dates
- Consistent, central meeting space
- Minutes and Action Step follow-up
- Subcommittees and workgroups
- Limited number of members (review commitment annually)
Building a Vibrant Committee (continued)

- Volunteering during committee sponsored events
- Writing grants together
- Obtaining recognition for committee
- Food
Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead
Questions?

Thank you!

Barbara Blacklock
Black005@umn.edu