Student Behavioral Health: Crisis & Opportunity
National Landscape

The College Student Mental Health Crisis

‘I Didn’t Know How to Ask for Help’: Stories of Students With Anxiety

The Kids are Not Alright: The Mental Health Crisis on College Campuses

Record Numbers of College Students Are Seeking Treatment for Depression and Anxiety — But Schools Can’t Keep Up
Key Takeaways

Students are reporting **increased behavioral health issues** and seeking help in record numbers.

**Anxiety** and **depression** are the most common student behavioral health concerns, and are increasing; **suicide** is also on the rise.

Behavioral Health issues significantly **impact the academic success and retention** of our students.
A state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

Source: World Health Organization (WHO), College Stats, 2018
## A Framework For Student Wellbeing

### Scope
- **Select students; most at-risk for self-harm or suicidal**
- **Students identified as part of a “vulnerable” population**
- **Majority of students; experience some stress but do not require counseling or an intervention**

### Focus
- **Provision of timely services and support for students who are in grave psychiatric distress**
- **Programs and services aimed at helping students experiencing high rates of stress or behavioral issues**
- **Preventative efforts to teach students how to create and maintain healthy, balanced lifestyles**

### UW Institutional Examples
- **UW-Whitewater:** Behavioral Intervention Team
- **UW-Stout:** Behavioral health screening for student athletes
- **UW-Superior:** Pruitt Center for Mindfulness & Wellbeing

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**Source:** Adapted from the University of California Student Mental Health Resources & Promising Practices Report, 2006

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**All In Wisconsin**
Wisconsin High School Students

Self-Reported Rates of Anxiety, Depression, and Self-Harm

Source: Department of Public Instruction (DPI) – Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 2017
Depression

A behavioral health disorder characterized by persistently depressed mood or loss of interest in activities, causing significant impairment in daily life.

Source: World Health Organization (WHO), National College Health Assessment (NCHA), Spring 2015
Depression: UW System vs. Nationwide

- Felt so depressed it was difficult to function (1+ times in last 12 months):
  - UW System '15: 33%
  - UW System '18: 41%
  - National '18: 42%

- Diagnosed or Treated (last 12 months):
  - UW System '15: 16%
  - UW System '18: 23%
  - National '18: 18%

Source: National College Health Assessment (NCHA), Spring 2015, Spring 2010-2018
Anxiety

A category of behavioral health disorders characterized by feelings of worry, anxiety, or fear that are strong enough to interfere with one's daily activities.

Source: World Health Organization (WHO), National College Health Assessment (NCHA), Spring 2015
Anxiety: UW System vs. Nationwide

- Felt overwhelming anxiety (1+ times in last 12 months):
  - UW System '15: 58%
  - UW System '18: 65%
  - National '18: 63%

- Diagnosed or treated (last 12 months):
  - UW System '15: 19%
  - UW System '18: 27%
  - National '18: 22%

Source: National College Health Assessment (NCHA), Spring 2015, Spring 2010-2018
Suicide and Self-Harm

• Suicide is the act of ending one’s life, most often as a result of depression or other mental illness.

• Self-Harm is characterized by deliberate acts to wound one’s self.

Source: American Psychological Association (APA), 2015, College Stats, 2018
Suicide and Self Harm (last 12 months)

Source: NCHA-Spring 2015 and NCHA-Spring 2010-2018
Impact on Academics

- Stress: 34%
- Anxiety: 29%
- Sleep Difficulties: 23%
- Depression: 20%
- Cold/Flu/Sore Throat: 16%
- Work: 16%
- Troubled Friend/Family: 11%
- Internet/Computer: 10%

Source: National College Health Assessment (NCHA), Spring 2018
Counseling Center Utilization & Enrollment Trends

Sources: UW System Fact Book; UW System Counseling Directors
Counseling Services Standards

International Association of Counseling Services (IACS): "Every effort should be made to maintain minimum staffing ratios in the range of one F.T.E. professional staff member (excluding trainees) to every 1,000 to 1,500 students."

The UW System Mental Health Task Force reported in their 2009-10 report that the staffing ratios at UW Counseling Centers were on average between 1:2,000 to 1:2,500.

Source: International Association of Counseling Services (IACS), 2019
Impact on Health Services

- Student behavioral health issues account for up to **one third** of student visits to UW health services centers;
- Almost **one half** of visits to a UW health services center also involve a behavioral health issue;
- Because of **limited access** to psychiatric services, students are increasingly relying on health services for support;
- **Access to psychotropic medication assessment** and management is a struggle;
- Students request **documentation** from Health Services to be used for disability accommodations.

Source: UW System Health Directors, 2018
Impact on Disability Services

Source: National College Health Assessment (NCHA), Spring 2010-2018
UW-Green Bay: Behavioral Health Staffing

**UW-Green Bay**
3.15 FTE Licensed Professional Counselors
(4 part-time counselors)

**Marinette Campus**
1 Contracted Licensed Professional Counselor
(1 day/week)

**Manitowoc Campus**
1 Contracted Counselor
(1 day/biweekly)

**Sheboygan Campus**
1 Contracted Counselor
(1 day/biweekly)

One counselor serves both branch campuses.
In the last 12 months, students reported being diagnosed or treated for:

**UW-Green Bay**
- Anxiety: 30%
- Depression: 25%
- Panic Attacks: 15%

**National**
- Anxiety: 21%
- Depression: 17%
- Panic Attacks: 10%

**UW-Green Bay**
- Attempted Suicide: 1%
- Intentionally Injuring Self: 6%

**National**
- Attempted Suicide: 6%
- Intentionally Injuring Self: 7%

Source: National College Health Assessment (NCHA), 2017-18
UW-Parkside: Staffing

**Heath & Counseling Center**
- 1.5 FTE nurse practitioners
- 2.0 FTE licensed counselors
- 0.5 FTE AODA coordinator
- Contracted psychiatrist 8-10 hours per month

**Disability Services Office**
- 1.0 FTE administrative director & disability coordinator
- 0.5 FTE disability specialist
- 1.0 FTE administrative assistant

33% of all health center visits in 2017-18 were behavioral health-related
The number of students having academic difficulty due to medical or psychological issues resulting in a medical withdrawal has more than doubled:

- 43 in 2014-2015
- 103 in 2017-2018

Source: National College Health Assessment (NCHA), 2017-18
Increased faculty concerns for:

- Student success
- Demands on faculty time
- Fear of rare but present threats
- Not being prepared/qualified to respond to many of the needs

Increased need for:

- Timely service and follow-up with faculty
- Ability to refer and direct students to qualified professionals
Student Perspectives

Manasi Mohan
UW-Madison
Major: Molecular Biology, Minor in Global Health and Gender & Women's Studies

Sage Lefebvre
UW-Stevens Point
Major: Philosophy, Minor in Biology, Chemistry, and Sociology

Anjuli Holmes
UW-Parkside
Major: Psychology, Certificate in Mental Health Skills
Impact on Student Academics and Retention

- 22% thought about leaving school prior to counseling
- 77% of those who considered leaving school said counseling helped them persist
- 83% said their primary issues improved due to counseling services
- 93% would recommend counseling services to a friend
- 95% believe it is important to have counseling services located on campus
- 55% suggested increased hours and counselors as improvements

Source: UWS Counseling Impact Assessment Project, 2017-18
# Opportunities to Serve Students Better

## Scope

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## Focus

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## Potential Avenues to Explore

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<td>• Exploration of how to align all UW institutions with IACS Standards</td>
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<td>• Training programs aimed at enhancing the capacity of faculty and staff to better understand students who may be at-risk</td>
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<td>• Adoption of on-line tools that can be used by all UW students</td>
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