FACULTY SUPPORTING STUDENTS

GRADUATE STUDIES SUMMIT
JUNE, 2023
COLLEGE STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

- 2020-2021 school year, more than 60% of college students met the criteria for at least one mental health problem (Healthy Minds Study, published in the Journal of Affective Disorders, Vol. 306, 2022)

- Three quarters of students reported moderate or severe psychological distress (National College Health Assessment, published by the American College Health Association, 2021)

- 12-year trend – more come with dx & more severe pathology

- Suicide risk is the highest for ages 18-25 (CDC)

- Numbers increase for underrepresented and marginalized groups
BYU CAPS STATISTICS FOR APRIL 2022 - APRIL 2023

- 21,492 appointments
- 4,350 clients
- 35% have thoughts of suicide
- 4.89 average appointments per client
- Most common presenting problems:
  - Anxiety/Stress
  - Depression
  - Perfectionism
  - Academic Distress
  - Relationship Concerns
WHAT DOES A DISTRESSED STUDENT LOOK LIKE?

- Frequent absences
- Missed assignments
- Change in performance (doing poorly after doing well)
- Difficulty responding to emails
- Change in class participation or difficulty working with groups
- Difficulty making eye contact
- Erratic or inappropriate behavior
- Content in assignments that might cause you to worry
- Poor hygiene
- Anxiety, depression

- Or not
WHAT ANXIETY LOOKS LIKE

- Avoidance
- Intolerance of uncertainty
- Desire to control people and events
- Over-planning
- Sleep difficulty
- Difficulty with emotion regulation
- High expectations for self
- Stomach and digestion problems
- Headaches
WHAT DEPRESSION LOOKS LIKE

- feeling irritable or grumpy
- feeling tired
- feeling worthless or guilty most of the time
- feeling numb
- having thoughts of death or suicide
- having trouble sleeping – either falling asleep or staying asleep
- lacking motivation and feeling everything is too hard
- losing interest in food or eating too much
- losing weight or gaining weight
- lack of interest in hobbies
- not taking care of hygiene needs
- using cigarettes, alcohol or illegal drugs.
OTHER POTENTIAL GRADUATE STUDENT STRESSORS

- Imposter syndrome
- Balance/burnout/amotivation
- Financial concerns
- Time management/disorganization and/or fear of looking like they don’t have it all together
- Managing expectations
- Difficulty with assertiveness
- Feeling stuck/not knowing how or where to start projects
  - Worry they don’t know enough
- Feeling a lack of support
- Poor self care
- Worry about the future
- Relationship challenges

➢ What other things have you noticed your graduate students struggling with?
WHAT ROLE DOES FACULTY PLAY SUPPORTING STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH (ADAPTED FROM THE JED FOUNDATION)
ATMOSPHERE

- Create an environment of kindness, respect, and belonging
  - Unhurried
  - Encouragement
  - Open to feedback
  - Feelings of support
MODEL SELF CARE
HELPFUL (GENERAL) RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

- Practice being calm
- Actively listen
- Validate
- Show empathy
- Be genuine
- Avoid judgement
INVITE STUDENTS TO TALK WITH YOU

Responding in Class

- Non-committal, validating responses
  - Hmm
  - Interesting
  - I hadn’t thought of that before
  - I’ll have to think about that some more
  - Thank you for your comment

- Ask them to talk with you after class
  - Preferably a time when others are not around
INVITE STUDENTS TO TALK WITH YOU

Responding Outside of Class

- Let them know you care.
- Describe the behaviors you see and why they concern you.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Ask appropriate questions to discover if there is a problem.
- Find out what the issue is without delving into the issue.
- Don’t try to solve their problem (unless it is with your class).

***Remember – you are not their therapist.***
TALKING TO STUDENTS (EXAMPLE FROM HELPBYU.EDU)

- Talk to the person in private when possible.
- Be genuine and direct; talk to them about what you have observed.
- Express your concern clearly - make observations, not judgments or assumptions.
- Remain calm. It can be challenging to stay away from sharing your own anxiety, irritation, or emotional reaction.
- Try to stay focused on the person's feelings or needs. Respectfully help the person focus on items that can be addressed.
- Don’t forget to listen and let them discuss their feelings and thoughts. This can relieve some pressure.
- Show empathy, “That Reflect what you hear; “What I hear you to be saying is __________.”
- must be really tough for you.” or “It sounds like you’re feeling really overwhelmed.”
- Assist the student in developing an action plan that addresses the most pressing concern (write things down or follow-up with an email)
- Do not underestimate the power of your connection to this person if you are close to him/her.
- Do not promise confidentiality. Rather, inform the person that you will use discretion in seeking outside assistance.
NAVIGATING CHALLENGES RELATED TO PERFORMANCE

- Provide guidance including clear instructions, goals, and deadlines related to projects.
- Encourage/let them know you want them to succeed.
- Assist with problem solving.
- Decide whether you can give temporary accommodations.
- Negotiate with student and UAC for permanent accommodations.
NAVIGATING CHALLENGES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

- Ask if they have support navigating the challenge.
- Are they aware of resources?
  - Refer them to the office that can help.
- Ask if they are aware of CAPS resources.
- When in doubt, refer to CAPS.
IF YOU THINK THEY MAY BENEFIT FROM THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT …

Do This

- Encourage them to consider help and/or schedule a quick care appointment.
- Acknowledge, validate, and discuss concerns about treatment.
- Let them know that CAPS is free, confidential, and can be helpful.

Honor Agency

- Unless they are at risk of harming self or others, they cannot be forced into treatment.
RESOURCES FOR FACULTY

- **Help.byu.edu** (faculty/staff and common concerns tab)
  - Tips for talking to students about their struggles
  - How to make a referral
  - Distressed student protocol

- **CAPS.byu.edu**
  - How CAPS can help
  - More on how to help and talk to students
  - What to do in a crisis
CAPS RESOURCES

- Faculty Consultation
- Quick Care appointments
- Crisis Walk-in (1500 WSC between 8:00am and 4:30pm)
- After-hours crisis services (801-422-3035)
- Case Management
- Individual, group, and couples counseling
- Biofeedback/Stress management
- Dietician
- QPR Training for faculty and staff
- Outreach Services
DISTRESSED STUDENT RESPONSE PROTOCOL

- **Imminent Danger**
  - Call Campus Police 2-2222

- **Crisis**
  - Walk in to CAPS (during work hours)
  - Call CAPS 2-3035 and press 1 for crisis worker (after hours)

- **Urgent**
  - Call CAPS and ask for a “Quick Care” or one-time consultation
UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

- Academic Support Office
- University Accessibility Center
- Office of Belonging
- Women’s Services
- Multicultural Student Services
- International Student Services

- Financial Aid Office
- Registrar’s Office
- Student Health Center
- Title IX
- Sexual Assault Victim’s Advocate
- Sexual Assault Respondent Advocate