Accomplishments & Recommendations Summary
Student Mental Health Innovative Approaches Review Committee | Work Teams
Winter 2023

The *Student Mental Health Innovative Approaches* Review Committee established several work teams to advance recommendations in alignment with the charge of the Committee:

1. Explore and recommend innovative approaches to addressing student mental health and well-being; and,
2. To examine the current resources at the U-M and provide recommendations on how these may be improved, expanded, measured for effectiveness, and communicated to those who might need them.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Work Team: **Academic Policies**

Academic Calendar modification to extend the break period between Fall and Winter semesters, beginning in the 2023-2024 Academic Year.

Work Team: **Student Engagement**

Resource Navigators: Developed infrastructure to sustainably institutionalize the Resource Navigator program as a key centralized information source for campus to support student success.

- *Increased staffing within the Campus Information Center (CIC).*
- *Developed a knowledge base to make effective campus referrals.*

Work Team: **Building Faculty Capacity**

Expansion of the wellness check-in survey intervention for large introductory courses/programs.

Work Team: **Wellness Coaching/Wellbeing Academy**

Wellbeing Academy | Curriculum Development & Training

The Academy provides a multi-level framework to support student wellness, which includes 1:1 and group coaching for undergraduate and graduate students and trainings on how to have respectful and helpful conversations about well-being issues.

Implementation of YB Men Project
The YBMen Project is an educational and social support program for young Black men. Through the project, we can learn about the strategies that influence and shape young Black men's ideas and experiences with mental health.
- Initial implementation in Winter 2022
- Continued with in-person programming for Fall 2022 and Winter 2023
- Offered 8 sessions of the Cabin Series

Expansion of Wellness Coaching Services
- Added weekly Wellness Coaching appointments at the Trotter Multicultural Center
- Increased availability of Wellness Coaching appointment slots

Work Team: Technology Usage in Service Delivery and Resource Mapping Team (Tech Work Group)

Community Mobile App Pilot | Wolverine Life
The Community Mobile App pilot, *Wolverine Life*, has been extended to continue into Fall 2023. This application contains student facing resources, which have been integrated into University systems. Survey results were mostly positive at both the Beta stage and the current pilot stage.

Third Party Mental Health Applications Inventory
The field of technology solutions is expanding exponentially and there is potential for innovative solutions as well as potential harm if we do not keep this work as an ongoing priority. The Tech Work Group created an inventory of known third party mental health applications utilized on campus. The inventory identified over ten third party applications contracted by Student Life or individual schools/colleges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Work Team: Academic Policies

Central University Student Success Office with Dedicated Staff for Undergraduate Education
- Create a senior position (open to a staff or faculty appointment) and university office of student success within the Office of the Provost.
- Establish and appoint an advisory committee.

Rationale
- Realizing the vision of a responsive, wellbeing oriented campus will require cooperation and collaboration from academic and administrative units across campus.

- U-M is an outlier compared to the majority of our peer public institutions, with most having a central leader and office that provides campus-wide leadership around undergraduate education, including setting the university strategic direction around undergraduate student success and the student experience.
- Aspiration is to ensure that all U-M undergraduate students, regardless of school or college affiliation, have a consistent educational experience that leads to enhanced student success

Coordinated Student Support Team for Leaves of Absences
- Create clear policies for leaves of absence.
- Create a coordinated support team around leaves of absence
- Reconstitute the approach to academic probation, suspension, and dismissal

Rationale:
- The ability to take leaves and return to campus can be important for some students' wellbeing.
- There is no universal policy that defines a leave of absence for all undergraduate students or outlines required steps or processes related to taking or returning from a leave of absence.

Centralized Student Information Resources and Tools Regarding Academic Policies
- Develop a centralized information hub to support student decision-making and success.
- Develop resources and tools to provide students useful guidance around enrollment decisions.

Rationale:
- There is a general lack of awareness among students, staff, and faculty about where to find information regarding academic policies for each school and college.
- Staff and faculty who are working to support students also experience challenges providing students with relevant and accurate information.
- The creation of user-friendly digital resources will allow students (in addition to staff and faculty) to effectively access critical policies and information, consider important questions regarding enrollment options, utilize practical tools such as decision trees, and connect to additional

Grading & Course Withdrawal Policies
- Create greater consistency, transparency, and support around the process of designating courses as pass/fail.
- Create a uniform policy for repeated courses.
- Create a university-wide policy regarding incompletes that reduces penalties for students.
- Create a consistent university-wide policy for a course withdrawal deadline at week 9 of each semester.

Rationale:
- Grading policies currently present significant challenges for students, both because policies differ between academic units and courses and because the policies have implications for students' academic progress and academic records.

- Reduce students' anxiety around grading in order to foster a focus on learning and a willingness to take risks in course selection that will allow them to explore different areas of knowledge and take advantage of the extensive course offerings available at the university.
- Allow students more agency in deciding how their grades are recorded.
- Students should also be supported in making decisions that maintain academic progress in their chosen programs.

Registration Policies
- Review course availability to better meet demand.
- Eliminate split registration appointments.
- Form an exploratory committee of faculty, staff, and students to consider establishing a wave system for undergraduate registration.
- Hold registration one week earlier in the fall term.
- Create a stronger support system to help students resolve financial holds.
- Make the priority registration process transparent.
- Establish a Priority Registration Advisory Committee through the Registrar's Office.

Rationale:
- Nearly every aspect of registration—e.g., restrictions, reserved seat and waitlist procedures, and registration restrictions—differs across units and that much of the information that would be needed to navigate these differences is challenging to locate.
- Currently, students are assigned to registration appointment blocks based on their total credit hours toward program completion with certain adjustments.
- Some students have access to many of their preferred courses, while other students have access to fewer.
- Students who have high priority over-enroll in classes with the intention of dropping some at a later time, which reduces availability for other students.

Reimagine the Transfer Student Experience closer to the First Year Experience
- Take steps to ease the transition and create a welcoming environment for transfer students.
- Create flexibility around start dates for transfer students.
- Facilitate transfer credits through more robust systems and policies.

Rationale:
- New transfer students represent 18% of the incoming Fall 2022 undergraduate cohort. They are admitted at a higher rate than first year applicants (37% vs. 16% selectivity), and yield at a significantly higher rate than first year applicants (77% vs. 46% yield).
- Prospective transfer students are often faced with uneven, incomplete information on transfer credit equivalencies.
- Due to capacity issues, an academic advisor may not be available until after matriculation.
- Once transfer students arrive on campus, they receive some, but not all of the attention and resources that first year (our relatively recent term for freshman) students receive.

The Development of Faculty Resources
- Develop a comprehensive Faculty Toolkit.
- Improve instructor awareness of student mental health concerns.
- Offer and incentivize instructor training related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- Provide tools to support instructor course planning.

Rationale:
- Class-level policies and practices vary across courses and academic units.
- students report that course-level policies are often unclear and that their inability to understand and navigate the policies, monitor their performance in courses, and access support from instructors can create stress and anxiety.
- A growing body of scholarship and best practices literature suggests strategies for developing policies and practices that support student mental health, wellbeing, and learning.

Work Team: **Student Engagement**

A strategic focus on fostering connections and engagement for new incoming undergraduate and graduate/professional students.
- Develop the Resource Navigators program into a trusted resource by our students, staff, and faculty through increasing visibility, strengthening campus partnerships, and continuing to learn from the data we collect.
- Enhance collective skills of our staff to support students in navigating campus resources through integration of new "referral framework" into student-facing staff training.
- Expand the existing Welcome to Michigan structured partnerships to strengthen support for students entering in January ("winter admits") and admits at other points of the year to build community and learn about campus and campus resources.
- Re-invent the First Year Experience model with curricular and co-curricular connections through benchmarking, gathering information on related current initiatives and communications, and developing a set of recommendations based on this learning.

Rationale:
- It is critical that we center students with the highest needs for resource connections through prioritizing partnerships with programs and initiatives that are in place to support underrepresented students' thriving on campus.

Work Team: **Building Faculty Capacity**

Develop an easy-to-use resource for faculty/instructor.
- Promoting student well-being
- Responding to students in mild to moderate distress

- Responding to students in severe distress
- Accessing mental health resources

Rationale:

- Students value reviewing academic and wellness resources with faculty.
- Create timelines/checkpoints for major assignments to assist students with time management.
- Develop accommodation and extension policies that are consistent across mental and physical health issues.
- Be prepared with strategies for responding to students in distress.

Development of a Canvas Course for Instructors on Supporting Student Mental Health and Well-Being: A collaboration between the CRLT Theatre Program and Center for Academic Innovation.

- Course modules will include topics such as exploring the landscape of mental health in higher education, considering the role of identity in student experience, teaching to support student mental health and well-being, responding to requests for accommodations, supporting students experiencing mild-moderate distress, supporting students experiencing high distress.

Rationale:

- Provide faculty with asynchronous learning opportunities that include research overviews, embodied case studies, and reflection.

Work Team: [Identity & Wellbeing](#)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion should be integrated into all aspects of the Well-being Collective

- Work with DEI 2.0 Plan. Create a relationship with the chief diversity officer to help guide schools and colleges to create policies and systems that are more accessible.
- Have experts on DEI represented across the Well-being Collective infrastructure.

Rationale:

- Equity and access needs to be at the center of the work.
- Members of the broader wellbeing collective impact group deconstructing their understanding of health and wellbeing across identities is key to making progress.

Complicate Our Understanding of Wellness, then Reflect It

- Update the Social section of the Model of Well-being to include feelings of belonging.
- Engage the committee in conversation to set a foundational knowledge of "wellness" through an intersectional lens.
- Consider using an Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) group profile to create a baseline understanding where/how we are operating.
- consider key populations: BIPOC community, LGBTQIA2S+, Veterans, working parents, survivors, students with disabilities, students with chronic health conditions etc.
- When using reports with demographic breakdowns be aware of who is excluded due poor demographic design or populations being too small.

Rationale:

- Currently the Model of Well-being is not situated in a socio-political climate.
- Examine cross cultural understandings of wellness

Work Team: Wellness Coaching/Wellbeing Academy

Bolster Capacity of Professional Wellness Coaches
- Rollover the rest of the budget we had from this last year for the 2023-24 fiscal year in order to have sufficient Wellness Coaches to meet service demands in a timely manner.

Rationale:
- We needed the coaches in the fall when we are training new coaches, have a higher number of alcohol and other drug clients from football tailgates and have new student clients needing assistance with their transition to UM.

Develop a comprehensive marketing plan with an expert will assist efforts to promote Wellness Coaching and the Wellbeing Academy.
Rationale:
- Robust marketing strategies will better promote both services to students, which is critical in a decentralized campus environment

Work Team: Technology Usage in Service Delivery and Resource Mapping Team (Tech Work Group)

Establish an Institutional Digital Mental Health Strategy
- The University of Michigan would greatly benefit from an overarching digital mental health strategy to anchor efforts to guiding principles and key performance indicators
- Procurement updates its approval process for new digital/virtual mental health solutions that prioritizes accessibility, privacy and current resources and contracts and directs potential sponsors of future purchases to the Technology Work Team

Rationale:
- There is a need for updated documentation and coordination of, between, and among the various resources, apps, and platforms being used at U-M
- Promote and support the use of the Vendor Intake form and engage procurement to ensure quality control and contract alignment with all mental health technology platforms