SUPPORTING STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

The issue of how to appropriately address student mental health issues has been getting increasing attention over the last few years. With university-aged students identified as some of the most vulnerable for developing mental health challenges, universities have been working to identify, develop and implement policies and procedures within their campuses, to support students and those within the university community.

Here at the University, many processes have been developed and put into place for students in need of assistance, guidance and support, when dealing with and managing mental health challenges.

The Mental Health Advisory Committee was established for students by the AVP Student Affairs and the VP Academic, to review the University’s mental health services and assess student mental health needs & programs. The Student Mental Health Strategy provides a solid review of campus goals and acts as a guide for the development of mental health policies, processes and procedures.

To ensure and sustain a supportive campus environment, student supports can be accessed via the following University contacts and policies:

University Contacts

* Student Wellness Services - comprised of numerous connections through the Wellness Education Centre, Student Support Network, Counselling Services, which provide integrated health & wellness services to assist students in managing their health & well-being. Student Accessibility Services provides support for those students who need accommodations based on a disability.

* Campus Community Police - provides round-the-clock assistance to the University community to ensure the safety of students and the university community.

* Student Affairs Case Director – Robin Begin is the liaison between support & academic units, both on and off-campus, in supporting students at risk

* Residence Life Staff – provides 24/7 support to students residing in residence

* Student at Risk Team (SART) – identifies at-risk students and provides support to students in crisis, including the identification of appropriate services/staff

* Office of Legal Counsel – can advise staff/faculty who are supporting students experiencing challenges, with respect to the university’s responsibilities

* Community Partnerships – strong ties to community stakeholders (i.e. Women in Crisis, Homewood Health Centre) who assist in extending on-campus supports

* Mental Health Awareness website – online training available via Counselling services that provides info on responding to someone with well-being concerns

* More Feet on the Ground – faculty/staff training website that teaches users how to recognize, respond and refer students dealing with mental health issues on campus

University Policies/Protocols

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities, Continuation of Study Policy, Protocol for Responding to Students at Risk

The increase in mental health challenges for post-secondary students is everyone’s business. For additional information/direction, please contact the Office of Legal Counsel at x53082 or via email at legal@uoguelph.ca.