

Fall 2021 BSHES Wellness Community Assessment

by Danielle DeSantis, Kiko Goto, My Nguyen, Lewam Stefanos, and Kayla Whaley

This community assessment team worked in collaboration with the BSHES Department to understand the mental health and well-being needs of BSHES MPH students and how to prioritize and address them. Findings from this project aimed to support ongoing initiatives by the EDI Working Group that focuses on building an inclusive and equitable student community in the MPH program. Qualitative data collected during this project aimed to help the department determine the type and expand the scope of mental health programming that honor and support the rich diversity of the BSHES student body in addition to advocating for change at the school level. This assessment aimed to conduct an in-depth analysis of both the perspective of faculty and staff on their roles in supporting students and the challenges students have faced and continue to face, as their educational and mental health needs are ever-evolving. In-depth key informant interviews of faculty and staff in addition to student led focus groups served as our primary data collection methods.

The assessment questions explored were the following:

1. What are the mental health and wellbeing needs for the BSHES student community?
2. What mental health and wellbeing services and resources are available to students?
3. How can BSHES create an inclusive community so that all students can thrive?

Recommendations from BSHES Mental Health Community Assessment

Recommendation	Action steps	Notes
Communication about mental health resources (BSHES)		
Publicize mental health resources among multiple venues such as BSHES Community page, Instagram, professors' announcement in classes, on-campus event tabling.	<p>January 2022 – Information added to BSHES Community Canvas Page</p> <p>January 2022 – DGS shared information about resources with instructors at teaching check-in</p> <p>January 2022 – In faculty meeting, DGS encouraged instructors to share information about mental health resources in classes</p> <p>February 2022 - GRA posted information on BSHES Instagram</p>	<p>Next steps: Continue to collaborate with GRA to post information on BSHES Instagram</p> <p>DGS will incorporate information into new instructor orientation</p>
Create appealing marketing to advertise mental health resources. A graphic designer could make materials easy-to-read to effectively reach students who may need it.	February 2022 - GRA posted information on BSHES Instagram	Next steps: Continue to collaborate with GRA to post information on BSHES Instagram
Publicize mental health resources during high-stress periods of the semester (i.e. before breaks, during exam times) and remind students several times through the semester.	January 2022 – In faculty meeting, DGS encouraged instructors to share information about mental health resources in classes at multiple points during the semester	Next steps: Collaborate with GRA to post information on BSHES Instagram
Increase awareness of the confidentiality of mental health services. Reinforcing that clinical services are kept confidential and explaining	January 2022 – Information added to BSHES Community Canvas Page	Next steps: DGS will incorporate information into

what this specifically means, may mitigate ambivalence for students considering these services. (also under CAPS)	January 2022 – In faculty meeting, DGS encouraged instructors to share information about mental health resources in classes	new instructor orientation and teaching check-ins
Awareness of services available to students and how to financially access those services		
Create a one-stop resource center similar to CORQ app, such as a newsletter that publicizes social media pages for specific categories (i.e. cultural identity groups, on-campus events, mental health resources).		Next steps: Meet with student services
Informal mental health breaks		
Faculty Implement mental health check-ins during class. This will aid in productivity throughout class time while also making sure students are not overwhelmed	Faculty were encouraged to continue to allocate time to check in with students during class and offer mindfulness activities.	Next steps: Follow-up with instructors to see how mental health check-ins are going
Events and space		
Make informal opportunities for students to interact with faculty outside of classrooms in order to reduce hesitancy to reach out to faculty. Similar to Convos on Tap, an event specifically for students, we recommend events where faculty and staff attend to develop rapport with students	Spring 2022 – BSHES reps planning Den of 10 event	
Widen the scope of trainings for faculty, staff, and administrators to encompass DC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emotional intelligence, implicit bias, microaggressions, and reflexivity regarding DEI issues Coordinated care response How to respond to student crises, accommodate and support students with accessibility concerns, and de-escalate conflict 	Spring 2022 - EDI Working Group & Capital City Justice Group offering event series: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical Conversations – 2-part series for faculty, staff, and students 	Next steps – DGS will incorporate elements from this recommendation into new instructor orientation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating an environment that promotes self-care to prevent compassion fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectively Addressing Microaggressions – 2 sessions (one for students, one for faculty) • Wellness series – 3-part series for students <p>January 2022 – Student Services offered the Coordinated Care Response for TAs. DGS encouraged all BSHES TAs to attend and/or review the materials. The training was attended by several BSHES TAs and DGS.</p> <p>January 2022 – DGS shared Student Support Toolkit at faculty meeting and in email to spring instructors</p>	
---	--	--