



2019-2020 Annual Report
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Counseling Center

Message from the Director

The 2019-2020 academic year was a time of significant change for the University of Illinois at Urbana- Champaign Counseling Center. As with most other things in our lives, the COVID-19 global pandemic forced us to change how we operate and interact with students. While we had to quickly re-configure our service delivery methods to be online, we came together, were flexible as we worked through the challenges, and kept our sights on how we could best support Illinois students during these unprecedented times. I was and continue to be impressed with the innovation and persistence our staff showed as we pivoted to offer both clinical and outreach services virtually.



Prior to COVID-19, we were on track to have another record-breaking year in terms of the number of students we saw. While we initially saw a dip in the number of students seeking mental health counseling through the end of spring semester, we were on par with pre-COVID-19 numbers by the beginning of summer. This year, we had 12,308 individual appointments and 3,601 group appointments. Our Outreach and Prevention Services offered 1,100 events that served a total of 36,182 students, faculty/staff, and parents—which is still an increase in the number of people served in 2018-2019. Research and what we are seeing anecdotally indicates the pandemic has and will continue to have a tremendous effect on the mental health of our students. We will continue to be attentive to these needs to ensure students are supported and access the services they need to thrive and be productive.

While the pandemic certainly was the biggest headline for the 2019-20 academic year, we continued to work toward our previously-set goals. This year, we continued to expand our embedded counseling model with clinicians added to serve in the Gies College of Business and Division of General Studies in addition to the Grainger College of Engineering and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. We also hired clinicians to serve University Housing, the Colleges of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences and Applied Health Science. In 2020-21, we will continue to look for ways to expand the embedded model even further as it has produced great results thus far. This year, we also welcomed Dr. Sue Stock as our Associate Director of Clinical Services. Sue brings a wealth of experience to her role and will be critical in determining how we continue to develop services that best respond to the changing needs of students.

While uncertainty about the length of the pandemic remains, I have the utmost confidence the Counseling Center will handle whatever challenges we face and continue to support our students in innovative and impactful ways.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carla J. McCowan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carla J. McCowan, Ph.D.
Counseling Center Director

COVID-19 Response

When campus advised students that classes would be online after Spring Break on March 13, the Counseling Center went to work implementing an enhanced version of Zoom that was compliant with HIPAA guidelines. While Counseling Center staff and Student Affairs information technology was able to implement this incredibly quickly, student consultation and outreach and prevention services became the way we were able to stay connected with students. Below is a snapshot of the programming we offered to assist students as many of them moved home unexpectedly and were subject to shelter-in-place orders.

Counseling Center Virtual Outreach March 16-May 8

Programming



606
students
reached



79
outreach
events

Programming included:

- Tuesday @ 7 workshops by Counseling Center Paraprofessionals
- Daily Mindfulness Drop-In Sessions
- RIO Online Emotional Regulation Training
- Expressive Arts Drop-In Workshops spaces for Black and LGBTQ+ students.

Social Media



1,034
times videos
viewed



10K+
social media
impressions

Social Media Campaigns included:

- #InThisTogetherIllinois COVID-19 self-care campaign
- Anxiety and Depression Awareness Week
- Sleep Hygiene Week
- #FinishTogetherIllinois finals stress management

Comprehensive Counseling Center Model

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is a Comprehensive Counseling Center. We believe that the elements described below are all integral parts of what we do and work together to support our university.



The Comprehensive Counseling Center model was introduced in a 2017 article published by Brunner, et al. in the *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy*. The authors assert that college counseling centers are much more than sites to provide students with psychological counseling. Rather, they suggest that outreach and prevention (psychoeducation and explanation of services), training experiences for students pursuing careers as mental health professionals, and providing guidance on managing mental health crises to faculty and staff are integral to responding to the changing landscape of college mental health. Universities across the nation have reported that, like we've seen at Illinois, students are presenting at increased rates and severity.

Mission, Vision, and Values



Counseling Center staff members at fall 2019 retreat.

Our Mission

The Counseling Center is committed to providing a broad range of high quality, innovative, and ethical services that address the psychological, educational, social, and developmental needs of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign students. We also actively contribute to the campus' broader academic mission by training and developing students and professionals, helping build a multicultural learning community, and providing leadership in forming collaborative partnerships among Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, the Graduate College, and Administrative Affairs units.

Our Vision

The Counseling Center enhances the overall well-being of students at the University of Illinois.

Our Values

Commitment to excellence

Wellness

Diversity and inclusion

Integrity

Collaboration

Clinical Services



TOTAL INDIVIDUAL
CLINICAL
APPOINTMENTS

12,308



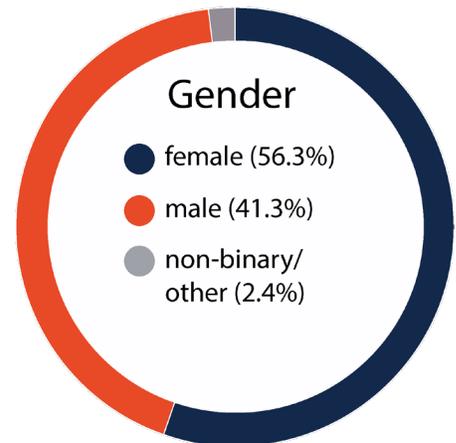
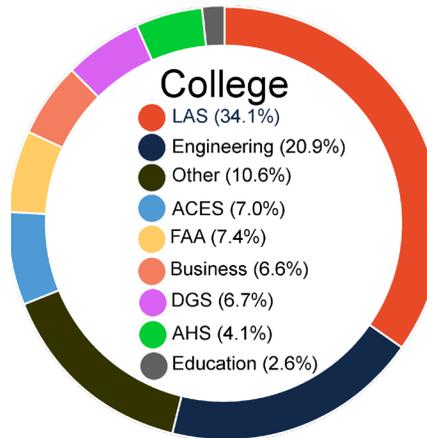
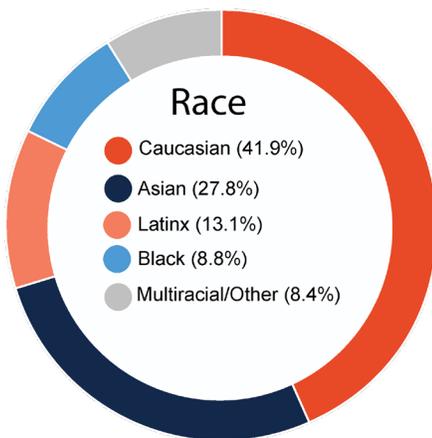
TOTAL
PSYCHOTHERAPY
GROUPS OFFERED

58

TOTAL GROUP
APPOINTMENTS

3,601

INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDENTS WE SERVED



54.9% of clients were from traditionally underserved groups.

ACCESS AND CLIENT SATISFACTION



Nearly **half (49.4%)** of respondents on our Client Feedback Survey stated they were able to get a same-day appointment the **first time** they called. **45.9%** reported they were able to get in the second to fourth time they called.

97.8%

97.7%

96.6%

Students receiving services agreed or strongly agreed that:

**their session
addressed their
needs.**

**their counselor had a
good understanding
of their needs and
problems.**

**their session
helped them.**

Consultation and Crisis Management

Counseling Center staff are always available to assist students who are in the midst of a crisis or to consult with faculty and staff about how to approach a student who may be in need of our services. Through our trauma response efforts, triage efforts for students who feel they need to be seen right away, and our liaisons across campus, we strive to be there for the campus community when they need it most.

TRIAGE SERVICES FOR UNPLANNED APPOINTMENTS



NUMBER OF
UNPLANNED APPOINTMENTS

404

TRAUMA RESPONSES



NUMBER OF TRAUMA
RESPONSES

4



NUMBER OF
STUDENTS SERVED

306

LIAISONS ACROSS CAMPUS

While the Counseling Center provides consultation to any person on campus who has concerns about a student, we had formal Counseling Center liaisons with the following units for 2019-20:

Asian American Cultural Center
Applied Health Sciences
Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences*
College of Medicine
Division of General Studies*
Gies College of Business*

Graduate College
Grainger College of Engineering*
LAS Access and Achievement
LaCasa Cultural Latina
LGBTQ Resource Center
Native American House
University Housing

*Served by an embedded counselor.

Outreach and Prevention Services



TOTAL OUTREACH
EVENTS OFFERED

1,100

TOTAL PEOPLE
REACHED

36,182



For each hour of outreach conducted, we reached **16.24** students.

OUTREACH POINTS OF PRIDE

- Our psychoeducational offerings continue to expand. These workshops now comprise 10% of the our outreach efforts and include workshops on managing ADHD, test anxiety, perfectionism, time management, and emotional regulation/mindfulness.
- Our Alcohol and Other Drug Program offered early intervention classes on alcohol and marijuana information classes to assist students who may be grappling with substance use. Staff also led ACE IT trainings that reached **94.8%** of all first-year and transfer students with information on safer drinking practices. Staff focusing on AOD issues engaged in prevention during high-risk times such as Unofficial and Halloween.
- Our Counseling Center Paraprofessional Program (CCP) continues to thrive as undergraduate peer educators are trained to do outreach on behalf of the Center. CCPs hosted **56** psychoeducational workshops and reached more than **1,300** students.
- Inner Voices Social Issues Theatre allows us to reach students in innovative and unconventional ways. During the 2019-20 academic year, Inner Voices celebrated its 25th Anniversary. A reception was planned to mark this tremendous milestone, but had to be postponed. Inner Voices continues to evolve as the current situation makes live performance inadvisable. This past year, Inner Voices reached **1,766** students through interactive appearances and performances.



Members of the Queers & Allies Outreach Team at CU Pridefest.



Staff, Graduate Assistants, and CCPs at Suicide Prevention Week.



Student with a care package from our #FinishStrongIllinois tabling.

This year, the Training Committee implemented several policies that will ensure this area continues to thrive. One of the tasks the committee completed was creating a job description for an assistant director of training. In addition, the Training Committee worked to benchmark our training program against other training programs in the Big Ten Counseling Center and other comparable-sized Counseling Centers with training programs to determine ways to expand our training program that will increase our ability to offer additional counseling services to students on campus in a more cost-effective way.

NUMBER OF TRAINEES WHO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED TRAINING AT
THE COUNSELING CENTER IN 2018-19:

4 doctoral interns
1 social work intern
5 practicum counselors



2019-2020 doctoral interns.



Doctoral interns present at 2019 Dennis H. May Conference on Diversity Issues and the Role of Counseling Centers.

Future Directions



2019-2020 CCP Cohort.

For the 2020-2021 year, our focus is on the following areas.

- **Continue embedded counselor program in academic colleges:** We plan to continue this program and have several additional counselors for Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES), Applied Health Sciences (AHS) and Housing, who will begin in fall 2020. We would like to have a counselor in every college and will actively investigate how we can have the campus-at-large assist in the funding of these positions.
- **Increase Use of Technology:** Our staff and students have ongoing plans to increase our use of technology via psychoeducational videos, WellTrack and online clinical screenings.
- **Continue to increase clinical access and provide clarity to remove misperceptions:** We will consider the possibility of limited online scheduling options. Additionally, we will be working with Student Affairs partners on developing a media campaign to provide clear information on mental health services.
- **Staff training in assessing risk to others:** We plan to explore ways to address a concern presented by a growing number of students who may be a risk to others. While our staff is skilled at providing services to students who present a risk of harm to themselves; the risk of hurting others is not necessarily analogous to the risk of harm to self and outside of the competencies of most of our staff. This training was rescheduled due to COVID-19 and will occur next year.
- **Telehealth for trainees:** We will develop guidelines for incorporating telehealth for trainees that are congruent with relevant ethical codes, Illinois statutes, and Counseling Center policies and procedures.
- **Refine assessment procedures:** We will create a plan to implement an online version of the Client Feedback Survey. Additionally, we will review and revise survey items in assessment tools to ensure that items are applicable to clients and their current needs.



2019-2020 Counseling Center graduate assistants.



Members of the Eating Disorders Outreach Team get out the message of No Body Shaming on the Quad.



API Roots and Alcohol and Other Drug Outreach Team members collaborate on an outreach at the Asian American Cultural Center.



Student Affairs

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