

University Counseling Services (UCS) Strategic Plan 2020-2023

Mission Statement

University Counseling Services cultivates the mental health and resilience of a diverse campus community.

Core Values

1. Compassion: Maintaining an empathic awareness through which we notice, understand and respond to other and ourselves.
2. Growth: Recognizing, nurturing and expanding our individual and collective potential by embracing change, learning, and training.
3. Equity and Inclusion: Empowering our communities, attending to contextual and cultural needs of individuals, and advocating for social justice.
4. Resilience: Encouraging the ability to prepare for, navigate, and overcome challenges while maintaining hope and motivation to work through adversity.
5. Integrity: Valuing transparency; meaning what you say; valuing honesty as a strength; valuing different opinions and different voices.
6. Connection: Cultivating life-enhancing connection to self, other, community and resources.

SSEM Goals and UCS Tactics

1. **SUCCESS: To support positive learning experiences and the development of knowledge and skills that foster success**

UCS Goal: To promote and foster student academic success, positive mental health, and resilience

Theme 1A: Tracking and Showcasing Success at the Departmental Level

1A1 Demonstrate departmental success: Track/optimize utilization of key programs, services, and spaces.

- Showcase ways the UCS attempts to address demand with a transparent website section (example of Brown University)
- Identify additional assessment and program evaluation opportunities to assess student needs/expectations and utilization and effectiveness of UCS services and programs
- Improve tracking of *Let's Talk* utilization and outcomes
- Improve tracking and external reporting of specialist activities
- Improve coding and tracking of education and prevention outreach programs
- Assess effectiveness of outreach in meeting defined objectives
- Improve tracking of student advocacy work (e.g., AEC accommodations, etc.) and method of external reporting

1A2 Showcase stories of success

- Wider implementation of student experience and similar surveys and dissemination of results on the UCS website and social media
- Develop digital newsletter for campus partners that can be used to highlight department and successes and achievements
- Add research and assessment tab to UCS website to showcase UCS research and assessment reports
- Provide presentations showcasing roles and work of UCS specialists for other universities and campus partners
- Social media project demonstrating work and contributions of UCS trainees (PI's, GEs, SAB, SSPT (student suicide prevention team) and doctoral interns

Theme 1B: Innovate Services at the Department Level

1B1 Innovate services that met the evolving needs of stakeholders

- Provide programs and services in modalities and at times that correspond to the needs of university students (e.g., visiting classrooms, joining remote meetings, etc.)
- Provide more groups in the early evening when students are available to participate in them
- Provide remote support to students in isolation in University Housing or other local sites due to positive COVID tests or other similar types of circumstances
- Provide presentations and support programs for campus partners (e.g., mental health self-care for various groups)

1B2 Innovate services that leverage the characteristics of successful programs

- Expand *Let's Talk* program to other departments (e.g., Graduate School, Honors College, Residence Life, Law School)
- Develop additional programs for marginalized and/or underrepresented communities utilizing expertise of the identity-based specialists and generalists (e.g. Black Cultural Center, Latinx ARC, LGBTQA3, International Student and Scholar Services)
- Expand hiring of and retention of identity-based specialist positions

1B3 Innovate services that utilize best practices, emerging trends, and novel platforms

- Increase online presence by adding programs that have coping skills and other relevant modules, more podcasts, blogs, and short videos that address mental health issues
- Create videos based on skill-based workshop content
- Increase utilization of Kognito training for UO faculty, staff, and students
- Implement WellTrack app

1B4 Innovate services that reduce barriers to success

- Offer emotional resilience workshop and groups
- Provide outreach on emotional resilience to diverse student communities
- Develop a webpage on emotional resilience
- Ensure that the UCS has licensed staff registered/licensed to provide teletherapy in participating states

2. SERVICE: To cultivate an environment where we are empowered and encouraged to serve University communities with excellence

UCS Goal: To create a sustainable model to consistently communicate internal and external learning experiences and professional development opportunities

Theme 2A: Professional Development

2A1: Proactively promote participation in internal professional development activities among all SSEM employees (e.g., info sessions, mini conferences, mentor program)

- Continue to provide quarterly multicultural professional staff developments and annual multicultural supervision staff development
- Continue to provide annual ethics training that meets licensure continuing education requirements for professional clinical staff
- Provide at least one half-day or full-day professional development training on a topic that is relevant to UCS work and meets licensure continuing education requirements for professional clinical staff
- Collaborate with other UO departments focused on mental health issues to provide continuing education for UCS staff and those other departments' staff
- Provide trauma-informed training to front desk/administrative staff who may be first point of contact for students whose behavior may be influenced by trauma
- Provide professional development workshops in areas of UCS staff expertise to other departments (e.g., suicide prevention, trauma-informed care, cultural competency, students in distress, college mental health issues)
- Engage in professional staff development related to socio-political current events

2A2: Increase annual participation in external professional development activities among all SSEM employees (e.g., training, conference attendance).

- As UCS budget and operational needs allow, continue to provide professional development funding for clinical staff to help meet licensure continuing education requirements and administrative staff for professional development purposes
- Promote University and other opportunities for staff professional development
- Implement a professional peer networking program with counseling centers similar to the UCS to promote sharing of innovative programs and services, staff professional development, and awareness of national counseling center issues
- As UCS budget and operational needs allow, provide professional development funds for specialists to attend expertise area training
- Ensure that front desk/administrative staff have access to engage in professional development opportunities

2A3: Proactively increase awareness of and supervisor support for career related professional development opportunities among all SSEM employees

- Ensure that all clinical and administrative supervisor/supervisee pairs annually develop staff member career/professional development goals and that those goals are discussed regularly in supervision meetings

- Ensure that all annual staff evaluations include reviewing progress toward previous year's professional development goals and the development of goals for the upcoming year

Theme 2B: Work Environment

2B1: Create a workspace that is safe and welcoming to all

- Implement safe and evidence-based practices for providing in-person services during COVID and other situations that have potential to create health and safety risks
- Continuing to enhance representative identities through hiring and retention practices, media in UCS spaces, etc.

2B2: Create a workspace where positive working relationships with supervisors and recognition of good work are the norm

- Supervisory staff and UCS Leadership implement regular staff recognition program in addition to UCS values medals (e.g. bi-annual retreats, end of year celebration)
- Provide supervisors with the modality to provide recognition their supervisees

2B3: Enhance initiatives for employee input and empowerment

- Schedule quarterly meetings with different staff groups (e.g., admin staff, pro mental health staff) to discuss and provide feedback on UCS related programs, services, and relevant issues
- Create internal survey to assess employee satisfaction and gathering of feedback
- Invite professional mental health and admin staff to attend UCS leadership team meetings where relevant topics will be discussed

Theme 2C: Cross-Division/University Knowledge

2C1: Implement a standardized SSEM onboarding process and orientation program

- Ensure consistent implementation of UCS onboarding checklist and UCS new employee orientation checklist
- Ensure opportunities for all new administrative and professional mental health staff to participate in SSEM or University onboarding and orientation programs
- Reinvigorate new staff mentorship program

2C2: Leverage existing facilities to create multi-faceted spaces that allow for growth and development

- Utilize new teletherapy model to reduce dependence upon physical office space to provide services and programs, allowing for the hiring of additional staff and providing programs and services outside of typical UCS business hours

3. COMMUNITY: To strive for an increasingly diverse, exceptional, and inclusive university community

UCS Goal: To build and retain a diverse staff that provides high quality and culturally relevant programs and services to the University community

Theme 3A: Sense of Belonging

3A1: Represent the university's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all SSEM communications, formal and informal

- Regularly review all public communication, website, and other printed and digital materials to ensure that they are culturally representative and appropriate
- Create social media presence that reflect these values and provide opportunities for person in this role to access specialists and student communities
- Expand print materials to communicate with members of specific underserved groups

3A2: Ensure students and staff can navigate SSEM spaces and find the services and programs they need

- Increase UCS presence at relevant SSEM and other relevant University programs (e.g., IntroDUCKtion, Residence Life programs)
- Ensure that the UCS website clearly communicates collaborative care model outline/description and available programs and services
 - Sections specific to identities, symptoms
 - Make outreach request process and link more obvious
 - Make case manager request information easier to find
- Use digital and print media more effectively to promote the variety of services available
- In collaboration with the Health Center, develop framework for the University Health Services umbrella organization and for how UCS and the Health Center work together
- Effectively communicate relevant aspects of the new University Health Services organization to students, families of students, and campus partners
- Explore online scheduling option in Titanium and implement, if appropriate
- Ask other campus partners and student facing websites to consider imbedding a button that links to UCS website/resources for students who need support
- Strengthen the UCS and Dean of Services connection and referral between resources

Theme 3B: Programming and Services

3B1: Identify and reduce barriers to serving and retaining underrepresented students via each unit's program/programming

- Continue to recruit and hire identity specialists, beginning with the vacant African-American Student Specialist and new Native American Student Specialist positions; determine what additional specialists could be added if funding and space allow
- Continue to provide identity-based *Let's Talk* program and expand it if demand for this program supports doing so
- Developing additional supports to enhance retention of identity base specialists
- Implement UCS exit interview or survey process

3B2: Identify and support students during times of transition

- Collaborate with campus partners to support graduating students
- Develop mental health strategies video, audio, and written resources for various college transitions (i.e. becoming a college student, transfer students, returning to college)
- Consider expanding ISP program to include transfer and other students in transition
- Explore WellTrack app and other existing resources to expand mental health options for students that do not rely exclusively on meeting with a therapist
- Advocate for wellness course

Theme 3C: Strengthen the SSEM Community

3C1: Advance the IDEAL Framework within the SSEM community

- Ensure that onboarding of all staff and trainees includes introduction to the IDEAL Framework
- Have UCS Inclusion Change Team regularly review the IDEAL Framework and SSEM Diversity Action Plan to track progress on meeting objectives related to these documents and to recommend steps to make progress

3C2: Increase awareness of and collaboration between SSEM units

- Develop liaison relationships with other SSEM departments
- Explore combined all staff meetings to create connections between SSEM units and other relevant campus partners

3C3: Collaborate with campus partners to increase knowledge of SSEM services to improve the success and experience of students from all backgrounds

- Regularly (e.g., monthly) invite campus partners to staff meeting to increase connection
- Develop liaison relationships with campus partners

4. ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY: To grow, promote, and champion the services and opportunities that facilitate and enhance a University of Oregon experience

UCS Goal: To increase accessibility of mental health resources, services, and programs through innovative, diversified, and culturally relevant points of contact, modes of program and service delivery, and strategic communication

Theme 4A: Reduce Barriers to Access

4A1: Reduce barriers to access through simplification of processes

- Continue remote paperwork process so that students complete paperwork ahead of their appointments/sessions
- Explore and make decisions about online scheduling for clinical appointments
- Offer alternative paperwork for clients with barriers to electronic process

4A2: Increase student access to existing resources

- More effectively and consistently apply collaborative care (single session) and short-term therapy model to create steady flow of open appointment times and short contact list and wait times for additional clinical services
- Expand *Let's Talk* program to other departments/student populations including Graduate School, Residence Life, academic or other support departments with unique needs
- Establish direct liaisons to student organizations to decrease stigma and increase participation in UCS programs and services
- Consider language barriers to paperwork and existing resources
- Explore how to make services more accessible to students with varying accessibility needs (i.e. AEC consult, student focus groups)
- Ensure UCS media meets accessibility guidelines

4A3: Reduce barriers to access through expansion of services

- Expand operational hours later in the day to make available to students after most classes end
- Continue teletherapy option for enrolled students during term, breaks and summer to maintain continuity of care, move students through the short-term therapy model more quickly, and get students started with therapy sooner than the start of academic terms
- Provide access to ongoing remote services for students needing a remote option due to health, safety, location (e.g. OIMB), or other relevant factors
- Develop parent and family presentations emphasizing decreasing stigma

Theme 4B: Affordability

4B1: Keep student costs as low as possible

- Continue to replace vacant generalist, 12-month positions with 10-month positions where reasonable to do so
- Evaluate expenditures to ensure that they are needed and cost effective
- Establish additional funding streams (e.g., grants, donor funding)
- Continue exploring technology options and resources to keep costs low
- Explore collaborations for students experiencing financial hardship to cover summer stop out fee (i.e. DOS fund, TRIO, etc.)