

Mental Notes

A Monthly Newsletter

Volume I, Issue 10, October 2007

MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES? Recent Surveys Suggest Need Rising, Resources Dwindling

by Adrian Péré, MSW, MA, GSW

A recent article in [USA Today](#) cites the 2006 National Survey for Counseling Center Directors as evidence of the growing need for mental health counselors on college campuses. According to the survey, 92% of college counseling directors believe the number of students with severe psychological problems has increased in recent years. In the same survey, 63% of center directors identified a growing demand for services without a corresponding increase in resources as their primary concern. Another study, the 2006 National College Health Report, indicated that 37% of college students experienced debilitating depression to the point that it was "difficult to function."

According to a different study cited in the same article, campus counseling center directors cited an increase in students reporting self-injury, eating disorders, sexual assault, and earlier sexual abuse. Counseling center directors also reported an increased need for long-term care, crisis counseling, and treatment of learning disabilities. According to the survey, this increased need for services was not matched by an increase in resources to provide such services.

These surveys seem to reflect a general trend with regard to mental health and the availability of services, or lack thereof--a trend ever on the minds of mental health providers in post-Katrina New Orleans. One need look no further than recent reports by the [New York Times](#), [Time](#), and [NPR](#) to find supporting evidence. (Just search "Mental Health New Orleans" in your Internet search engine of choice and see what turns up!) In spite of a recent increase in psychiat-

ric hospital beds, the reopening of parish mental health centers, and a small influx of psychiatrists in the area, informal surveys of area psychiatric service providers revealed alarmingly long waiting lists, with some clients waiting two months or more for evaluation and/or treatment. This is particularly problematic for individuals (including students) seeking affordable services. A depressed student with no insurance and only a bicycle for transportation is unlikely to invest extra effort in attaining needed services.

If there is good news to be found in these reports, perhaps it is this: Students are seeking help! The stigma often associated with mental health concerns appears to be abating. Students are realizing there is no need to suffer alone when help is available and certainly no need to be embarrassed about seeking treatment.

...campus counseling center directors cited an increase in students reporting self-injury, eating disorders, sexual assault, and earlier sexual abuse.

...increased need for services not matched by an increase in resources to provide such services.

Fall Workshops

Time Management

Wednesday October 17, 2007
12:30 - 1:30 PM Kirschman Hall 335

Relaxation & Stress Reduction

Thursday October 25, 2007
2:15 - 3:15 PM Kirschman Hall 301

Couples & Finances

Thursday November 6, 2007
2:15 - 3:15 PM Kirschman Hall 301

*For disability related accommodations, please contact Adrian Péré at 280-6683.



CAREER COUNSELING

by Chris Bishop, MSW Intern

Still stuck trying to choose a major? Wish you could choose classes based on your interests, skills, and relevance to your career goals? Guess what! You can!

UNO Counseling Services offers [Career Counseling](#) to students to assist individuals in making informed choices about the majors and thus the classes they choose. This service provides opportunities for the exploration of interests, skills, and values within the context of professional development.

UNO Counseling Services offers testing that can provide important feedback about your personality and what types of careers might be a good fit for you. In addition, testing can also measure your interests and perceived skills in a variety of jobs, professions, and potential careers. We offer two assessments in the Career Counseling process: The Campbell Interest and Skills Survey (CISS) and the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator (MBTI). The CISS assesses self-reported interests and skills and compares the results with those of individuals reporting high levels of satisfaction in their careers. The result is a list of possible career choices and suggestions for further investigation. The MBTI provides a snapshot of a person's personality type and a glimpse into an individual's way of communicating and interacting with others. This information can be very helpful in determining an appropriate career path, effective study habits, and even insight into issues one might have in relationships.

Call Counseling Services (280-6683) to schedule a career counseling session today.

UNO Counseling Services provides confidential personal and career counseling to UNO students on a sliding scale. Additionally, UNOCS provides referrals to local agencies and other resources for students in need. Please call 280-6683 for an appointment.