

Wellness Council

MGH Institute of Health Professions

Agenda: May 8, 2023, 12:00 pm Meeting

Minutes

Present: Luella Benn, Mike Boutin, Ronan Campbell, Steve Ciesielski, Dominique Couturier, Jack Gormley, Jennifer Mackey, Katie Mulcahy, Kenya Palmer, Jillian Salis, Lisa Staffiere, Jessica Upton, Sarah Welch

Welcome! Opening remarks, quality moments, kudos, good news (all)

Katie Mulcahy shared that the OT Department has their first in-person alumni reception. It included alums from many of the class years, members of the graduating class, faculty, and staff. It was hopefully the first reception of many.

Mike Boutin attended a Balint Group training with 14 SHRS clinical educators and faculty led by 3 Harvard Medical School Balint group trainers. Found it staves off burnout and isolation when students go out into clinical rotations. Noted attending the training provided he and his colleagues a significant boost to personal wellness and significant opportunities for interprofessional practice and scholarship.

Wellness Council members welcomed Jillian Salis OTD '25 to the meeting.

Luella Benn shared the official launch of the Ombudsperson Program. The Ombudsperson is a resource who students go to when they have a concern. The IHP is delighted to announce they have selected someone who the IHP knows well in Nursing Professor Emerita Pat Lussier-Duynstee, PhD, RN.

Mindful Moment (led by Dominique Couturier)

Take five breathing/meditation exercise was offered by Dominique Couturier.

Jessica Upton will offer the Mindful Moment at our next meeting in June, followed Katie Mulcahy in July, and Steve Ciesielski at the next meeting following our August break.

Review of Minutes from April Meeting

The draft minutes of April WC meeting were unanimously approved. Ronan Campbell will work to have these posted on the WC webpage.

Wellness Council appreciation (Ronan Campbell)

Please send sweatshirt sizes to Ronan Campbell with reference to appreciation.

Wellness news from AICUM – the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities - Massachusetts (led by Luella Benn and Jack Gormley)

L. Benn and Jack Gormley attended the AICUM Wellness Workshop April 25 at WPI which had a newly opened wellness space.

Host from WPI noted that we as student affairs professionals cannot expect counseling services to address all of our students' mental health needs.

J. Gormley noted a lot of what we are doing at the IHP is in line with what others are doing in the state.

Wellness Council self-assessment discussion: Preparing for WC Year 3 (led by Executive Committee)

L. Benn facilitated brainstorming session based on membership questionnaire shared on April 26(see attached).

Lisa Staffiere started the conversation noting new mental health benefits and selections from Mass Health and suggested sharing with those that help new students to matriculate. The link to the MGB ACO (Accountable Care Organization) MassHealth product which now uses the **Optum** Behavioral Health Panel, the same panel used by the employees' MGB health plan, is <https://massgeneralbrighamhealthplan.org/mgb-aco>. Optum offers broader behavioral health benefits than other MassHealth products. The link for general MassHealth enrollment: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/enroll-in-a-masshealth-health-plan-individuals-and-families-younger-than-65>.

K. Mulcahy mentioned that health benefits for students are covered in a preparing for your arrival course in June and that Jim Vitagliano and Anna Cottrell would be the staff to contact.

L. Benn noted challenges in sustaining subcommittees. Some of the most successful events have been a spark from a student group and committees were able to guide and advise.

K. Mulcahy asked if there could be a core group of members to meet throughout the year aside from specific committees?

Jessica Upton agreed with what K. Mulcahy noted and focusing on a top number of programs and then obtaining buy in from interested WC members.

J. Gormley noted there are teams that gain traction from outside sources that have a home now in the WC. Examples given were the Community Pantry and Mental Health First Aid training and certification.

J. Gormley asked council members to note their number one ranking for next year based on the

questionnaire sent ranking next year's topics. Finance and Nutrition were areas that had not been addressed.

D. Couturier noted mental or emotional health.

J. Upton agreed with mental and emotional health and asked if we can identify a month for each one of the areas listed.

Kenya Palmer explained how it is difficult to select just one and noted affordability issues are a stressor for students and can trigger other things as well.

Ronan Campbell noted mental and emotional health.

L Benn noted mental and emotional health and affordability with all that has been taking place with inflation, pay, and cost of living.

Jenn Mackey posed a question. What do students think the top priority is? As an educator, you can identify them based on your interaction with them but how do know what they really might need?

L. Benn thought of the question in another way. What do students need and what do they ask for our help in providing?

Sarah Welch noted mental health across the board for students and employees. S. Welch suggested creating a calendar and what might be able to be prioritized.

K. Mulcahy asked, how can we engage our academic partners? What are they doing already that we may be able to enhance? How do we build from there?

Jillian Salis offered a student perspective that there is still a lot of stress and isolation. Many classes and programs are still online and getting back to in person can be difficult for some individuals. Isolation may stem from a lot of the areas we have been discussing.

M. Boutin prioritized the financial piece and is based on Community Pantry shopping and budgeting for the future. Finances contribute to the mental health challenges we all face.

Steve Ciesielski noted students and struggle with finances. It is challenging to hold a student job while obtaining a degree. What can we offer as a community that can help with the stress (i.e., social events and programming)?

Jack thanked everyone and explained that feedback would be addressed by the Executive Committee at their next meeting and to contact him with any further suggestions/questions.

K. Mulcahy brought up the possibility of therapeutic knitting and it's a meditative component as a prospect for social connection and programming.

Questions, suggestions for future agenda items, reminders of upcoming events (all)

The meeting was adjourned at 1:07 pm. Next meeting is June 12, 12:00 pm.

Ronan D. Campbell

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Preparing for Year 3 – *We Want Your Input*

Please review these questions and be prepared to discuss them at the May 2023 meeting of the WC. If you are not able to attend the meeting, please email your responses to Ronan Campbell.

1. Considering the many issues that can challenge students' holistic wellbeing AND considering the limited resources of the Wellness Council, rank the following topics in order of significance for the Council for the next year (1 = most significant and deserving of attention, 11 = least so):

- Academic challenges (including clinical education challenges)
- Affordability issues / Financial stress
- Digital wellness (healthy, safe habits regarding Internet and technology)
- Isolation (feeling of loneliness, not belonging in cohort or IHP community)
- Marginalization / JEDI-related issues
- Mental or emotional health
- Mindfulness, spiritual health
- Physical health, fitness, nutrition
- Relationship stress
- Stress (in general, feeling overwhelmed, stressed by national/international news)
- Other (fill in as much detail as you like)

2. Do you have any suggestions for how the Wellness Council should prioritize resources, organizational structure, or members' time in the coming year?

3. What do you think the Wellness Council should do more of (or continue doing)?

4. Is there anything new that you would like to see the Wellness Council take on, or something you would like to see us do differently in the coming year? If yes, would you be willing to serve as a lead or co-lead on this new initiative?

5. What, if anything, do you suggest the Council does less of (or stop doing)?