**Executive Summary:**

**Integrating Wellness across the Curriculum Workshop**

**January 7, 2016**

On January 7, 2016, Gen Ed (Jacqui deVries) and the Center for Wellness and Counseling (Beth Carlson) co-sponsored a workshop on "Integrating Wellness across the Curriculum" that built upon a confluence of opportunities:

* the Faculty's stated commitment in the institutional Student Learning Outcomes (2014) to integrating wellness and sustainability across the curriculum
* new data on Augsburg students' health and well-being gathered during a state-wide survey (2015) of student health conducted by Katie Lust, Director of Research, Boynton Health Service, University of Minnesota
* a "Bringing Theory to Practice Grant" seminar grant from the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) for program development on the topic of student well-being

Twenty-four faculty and staff gathered to learn about and reflect on the data on student health, listen to faculty discuss their own strategies for furthering wellness in the classroom, and brainstorm next steps.

1. **The morning session featured a presentation by Kathryn Lust, Director of Research, Boynton Health Service, University of Minnesota.**

Dr. Lust’s presentation provided extensive data gathered from a survey administered in 2015 as part of a state-wide investigation of college student health. Surveys were sent to 2000 Augsburg students; 758 were completed (a 36% rate.) **Note:** Of the students who completed the survey, 24% reported being “first-generation,” which is far below the 40% officially recorded by Augsburg. Therefore, the data might not accurately represent the views and experiences of first-generation students.

**In many ways, Augsburg students align with the general trends:**

* Approximately 42% of Augsburg students have been diagnosed with a mental health condition during their lifetime (the average among all schools is 39.7%, with a range of 32% to 58%).
* 18% have been diagnosed with a mental health condition in the last 12 months (12% for men; 22% for women)
* Female students report more days of “poor mental health” than men (a mean of 7 days /mo versus 4.8 days /mo)
* The most commonly reported mental health condition among our students is anxiety (11.6%), followed by depression (9.9%), panic attacks (5.5%), seasonal affective disorder (4.3%), social anxiety (3.3%), and attention deficit disorder (2.5%)
* Approximately 24% of Augsburg students engage in “high-risk” drinking each month (5 or more drinks in one sitting.) This number is slightly lower than in 2011, the last time the survey was conducted.
* 53% of Augsburg students report getting adequate sleep on 3 or fewer days / week
* There is a direct correlation between perception of ability to manage stress, and lower GPA
* There is a direct correlation between alcohol / marijuana use and lower GPA (e.g. GPA falls from an average of 3.4 among students who don’t use restricted substances to 3.0 for students who do)
* 39.2% of women and 12.8% of men at Augsburg report having been a victim of sexual assault at some point in their lifetime
* 6% of Augsburg students report an eating disorder

**Augsburg students depart from general student health trends in some important ways:**

* A higher number than average declined to indicated gender (13%); 2% indicated they were transgender.
* More Augsburg students are uninsured (9% as compared with 3% at the U of MN; among male students, the number rises to 12%.) (Note: In contrast to the U of MN, Augsburg does not require insurance.) 6.6% of Augsburg students reported that lack of insurance was a major “stressor.”
* More students than average (2.7%) contacted a crisis line in the past month: of those, 33% contacted it once, 42% contacted it twice, 25% contacted it 3 or more times (meaning, the first call did not resolve the issue)
* More students at Augsburg report “food insecurity” (meaning, they worry about running out of resources for food by the end of the month) – 36% (as compared to an aggregate of 23.6% for 4-year private colleges)
* 47% Augsburg students report “excessive computer use” – 4% more than the aggregate of 43%

**A major conclusion:** **Over the last 15-20 years, the causes of stress have shifted. Once, more students reported learning disabilities; now, more students are struggling with psychiatric disorders. This study also shows that health and well-being are directly linked to academic performance.**

**During the discussion, the audience raised a number of important topics:**

* Most workshop participants did not know that Augsburg does not require its students to be insured and, as a result, we have much higher rates of uninsured students than other campuses. Administration sees insurance as a hidden cost for students and is concerned that requiring insurance would reduce numbers of students matriculating.
* Many other campuses have health centers, whereas we rely on Smiley’s, which is a couple miles away.
* Augsburg has a relationship with the Aurora Center on the U of MN campus, a 24/7 center which specializes in relationship conflict and sexual assault cases, but few faculty are aware of this.

**Some specific issues for faculty were highlighted:**

* A clear syllabus statement is really important – it needs to include all resources available, beyond just the CLASS office. And faculty should SAY IT OUT LOUD in class on the first day. There should be a simple link on Moodle (using the clean design system.) At the beginning of class, make some kind of statement encouraging students to talk to you (the professor), which would help to create a normalizing atmosphere.
* We need to get better at recognizing when students might have these stressors, especially the ACE’s (adverse childhood events). Our students often live Thoreau’s “lives of quiet desperation” – faculty are the first line of recognition and defense.
* When we do recognize symptoms, faculty should know that the academic alert system includes a kind of “emotional alert” system. There’s a section in which the faculty can report other issues.
* Faculty are required to report to campus authorities if a student discloses they have been a victim of sexual assault. How many people know this? Legally, when a student discloses information to anyone on campus, that’s disclosure “to the institution.” We aren’t sure yet about next steps. How do we let students know that we have to report? What are the range of things that need to be reported?
* Faculty should emphasize the message -- “If you are struggling, we want to support you.” Introduce that message into every class. A typical response by students is “I feel like I ought to handle this all by myself.” **We need to change the message to “It’s a sign of resilience to ask for help.”**
* Faculty should encourage students to use the CWC resources. Normalize counseling: 353 students used the CWC in 2014-15.

**Topics for future discussion:**

* Can we identify (and document) a relationship between well-being and retention?
* Micro-aggressions / macro-aggressions (discrimination and bias incidents) didn’t show up as data. This is big for our Muslim students.
* Physical disability wasn’t highlighted much, either, Kathy McGillivray pointed out. This survey didn’t illuminate anything about the health and well-being of disabled students on our campus.
* One staff reported some students have concerns that sexual assaults aren’t being dealt with … some blame Campus Security. Do we need an ombudsperson system on campus?
* We need a follow-up speaker on the cultural dimensions of wellness.
* There are some courses in which faculty have a much heavier load dealing with student issues: e.g. REL 100, modern languages, ENL 111.

**Next steps:**

* Faculty identified a need for a comprehensive referral guide to resources for students that is very easy to access, in one place (currently not all are aware of resources such as Aurora Center for sexual assault and relationship violence support; Community Resources Coordinator for food/housing/health care support; requirement to refer to CLASS when a student names any disability including mental health/physical/ADHD/autism/LD);
* Faculty asked for an electronic guide that is easily accessible (such as on the main Augnet webpage and easily linked to Moodle); they feel crisis resources for students should definitely be accessible from main Augsburg webpage (people don’t always know to look in A-Z; or know what center page to look at for the appropriate resources, centers have different names, etc)
* Faculty would like new Community Resources Coordinator, Lori Rolf, to attend next faculty meeting to introduce her services to faculty. She is the “social worker” on campus and can be contacted through Diane Detloff in CWC.
* IT can be asked to create a Moodle link to all support services and crisis resources
* Embed in AugSem (or somewhere else) training in financial skills; assertiveness training skills; skills in stress management.
* Look more closely at the issue of food insecurity: There is an emergency system in which the Dean’s Office can put 5 meals on a food card. Food shelf – 110 students used it last year. But there’s also the issue of education, since it’s not clear if the food insecurity is due to poor choices or lack of funds.

**II. The afternoon portion of the workshop featured a faculty panel discussing integration of wellness into the curriculum, and into their pedagogy.**

The classroom is a crucial place to help teach and model wellness. Yet, for many faculty this can be challenging. Faculty are trained to be academics; they’re taught to use objective language and to talk about their subjects. They’re often not comfortable asking students for personal responses. Nevertheless, Augsburg faculty have found some ways to support and nurture wellness, both in terms of pedagogy and course content.

**Eileen Uzarek (Health and Physical Education)**

* Eileen discussed her class on wellness, as well as the Health and Physical Education Department’s work to support students.
* She calls wellness “Crash and Burn Prevention”
* She believes it’s important to address all dimensions of wellness (physical, social, relational, spiritual, environmental/planetary, vocational, intellectual)
* Health and Phy Ed recruits an upper-class student as a volunteer to sit in the lounge and meet with underclass students to discuss how to study, as well as the working styles and expectations of the different faculty;
* Eileen sends out email at beginning of semester and mid-semester to remind students to use the services of the student volunteer;
* She practices an open door policy for students; when student comes for support: listen, Kleenex on the windowsill; Walk and talk
* She asks student their idea for a plan – what can they handle (have them put it in writing)
* She advocates a strong departmental culture: HPE faculty are always talking and supporting each other

**Melissa Hensley (Social Work)**

* Melissa discussed her approach to supporting students one-on-one, as well as the integration of reflections on self-care in the professional field education seminars.
* Her background is in Community Health and Addictions; so many students come to talk with her; Social Work has an open door policy
* She believes it’s important not to play role of therapist
* She suggests that when talking with student, asks questions like: What are some problem solving strategies you have used in the past? What resources have you used? Tell student – “you’re not the only one” -- experiencing depression and anxiety is not a sign of weakness, it’s a sign of being under stress
* In social work there can be shame about struggling, a feeling that they should have this all figured out as social workers; important to let student know this isn’t true, it’s normal to struggle; what matters is how you DEAL with it
* In Social Work 530 and 535 Field Ed Seminars, the class discusses self-care: What are my self-care practices? (writing assignment) They discuss how techniques they use with clients are things they can apply to themselves (thinks this is important for all professional studies)
* Community resource: Wellness Recovery Action Plan -- Self-help evidence-based practice developed by Mary Ellen Copeland; can take a two day course in the community; or use a textbook for self-study available from copelandcenter.com

**Merilee Klemp (Music Performance / Music Therapy)**

* Merilee discussed the role of physical wellness for musicians and how this is integrated into her classes.
* She sees music-making as involving the whole body; student needs to be relaxed to make music; she works with students to try to find a way to play with your whole body to feel relaxation (Ex: Alexander classes, chiropractor, yoga)
* She sometimes uses yoga at the beginning of class or the Eurythmics Dalcroze method
* She encourages daily practice to avoid overuse injuries for musicians
* She encourages adding wellness to the course design – a example is in the graduate music therapy classes which exposes students to different methodology every week (Feldenkreis etc.)

**Jon Zobitz and Rich Flint (Math)**

* Jon and Rich discussed their approach to Developmental Math, as well as to other math courses, with a focus on math anxiety and on empowering students to be self-aware and self-monitoring
* Developmental math – big focus on math anxiety as it is so common; normal to have anxiety, what matters is how they face their fears
* Math anxiety Bill of Rights – they have the students read it out loud (at beginning of the semester)

Examples:

I have the right to learn at my own pace and not feel put down or stupid

I hae the right to say I don’t understand

I have the right to not base my self-worth on my math skills

I have the right to define success on my own terms

* They discuss with students test preparation: adequate preparation, adequate sleep (not just the night before the exam, but the night before the night before the exam);
* They discuss time management – give weekly schedule and have them fill it in – are you over-scheduled?
* They hear that students feel empowered at end of semester -- frequently hear, best math course I ever had (developmental math)
* Department believes in course calendar with no surprises – the syllabus is very explicit, with plenty of time for review and exam preparation
* Professors strive to be calm/approachable
* They all have the policy of allowing students to turn in missed assignment for half credit (want them to learn the material)
* They see language as important:
  + “practice doesn’t make perfect, practice makes better”
  + “you are the one who determines whether you succeed”
  + “you just don’t know how to do that YET” – growth mindset (Carol Dweck -- if student doesn’t pass, they get a grade of “not yet”)

**Jacqui deVries (History)**

* Jacqui discussed a new approach she adopted in Fall 2015 in HIS 352 (“The Holocaust in German History”), in which students encounter a lot of traumatic material. In the past, she had them write a final paper in which they used the 3rd person narrative and synthesized others’ responses – in books, films, memoirs, etc.); this time, she asked them to do some of that, but also to try a first-person response – “how am I (the student) encountering it?”
* She assigned Viktor Frankl’s *Man’s Search for Meaning* as the jumping off point for the final paper
* StepUP students led the final discussion on Frankl – they happened to have read the book as part of their recovery program – it was especially powerful to have them present this work
* One focus of paper was “how are we going to respond and take a positive next step?”
* The intellectual (and emotional) engagement on the final paper was notably higher this semester as a result