"Designing Healthy Campus Communities: Enhancing Student Wellbeing and Academic Success" Webinar

Additional Topics of Interest

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Getting Started

For tips and guidance, please visit the Healthy Universities UK website and browse the variety of resources available such as the Self Review Tool, the Getting Started PowerPoint presentation and Guidance Packages.

Also, it may be helpful to explore a designated lead for your campus-wide initiative. At SFU this is the Health Promotion team. For other campuses, researching where this leadership would be best situated is recommended. In Student Affairs or within an Academic Department, or a combination could be considered.

Building Relationships and Faculty Buy-In

When working on the Well-being in Learning Environments project, SFU Health Promotion asked students to refer professors and instructional staff who they thought were doing a good job in terms of creating a positive classroom environment. When approaching instructors to meet with the Health Promotion team, it came with positive feedback on their teaching, so it made it a welcome meeting. SFU Health Promotion also emphasized that they were not the experts in the classroom, but sought the faculty members' expertise in terms of advancing this work. There are also natural partners in the Faculty of Health Sciences or Kinesiology where the content of courses connects to health promotion. SFU Health Promotion has often been called on to provide guest lectures for various courses addressing health and this has been a foundation for relationship building with some faculty members.

For more information on this project see Bringing Theory to Practice Fall 2013 Newsletter, *Simon Fraser University: Making Connections to Well-Being in Learning Environments*

Student and Employee Wellbeing – Bridging the Gap towards a Unified Approach

SFU Health Promotion, a division of Health and Counselling services, is leading the Healthy Campus Community initiative which includes staff, students, and faculty in creating a healthy campus. An example of a project that engages faculty and staff to improve student well-being is the Well-being in Learning Environments project. As the HP team is funded through Student Services, the primary mandate is to serve students (see case study for more details on structure, aims, etc); However, the team recognizes that staff and faculty well-being as well as the university setting impacts students and as a result partnerships with Human Resources at SFU are under investigation.

Incorporating Sustainability, Happiness and Wellbeing

SFU Health Promotion has been exploring the Sustainable Happiness resources online and is encouraging instructors to also explore opportunities to use these resources with students in their classes. To date, there aren't any SFU instructors who've incorporated Sustainable

Happiness, but it is a great potential resource as the Well-being in Learning Environments project moves forward. In terms of sustainability more broadly, the implementation of Health Promoting Universities in the UK has taken quite a strong focus on sustainability (for example, see their guidance package on the topic). SFU Health Promotion has had some initial discussions with the sustainability staff at SFU to explore collaboration possibilities.

The Impact of Physical Spaces on Mental Health

At the SFU's Burnaby campus there was a building that could no longer be used as a residence because of seismic upgrade concerns, however daily use of the building was safe. The team at SFU Residence and Housing transformed the space (with modest renovations, installing a big screen TV, including spaces for students to study in groups) to allow for students to connect socially. Anecdotal feedback included that having this space to connect meant students were feeling supported by one another in their academics and having fun socializing while watching their favorite competitive TV show. In addition, the cable package purchased included international channels so students could watch programs in other languages and connect to cultural programming.

There is a breadth of literature that highlights how physical learning environments affect student wellbeing as well as student achievement and satisfaction. Aspects such as lighting, temperature, air quality, furniture arrangement, perceived accessibility to nature, etc. can have positive impacts by reducing environmental stressors, increasing student engagement, lowering anxiety levels and promoting a general improvement in mood. More information can be found in the new Physical Spaces feature on the SFU Healthy Campus Community website.

Online Learning Environments

Creating a healthy campus community in different learning environments is possible. Some of the instructors featured in the Well-being in Learning Environments project at SFU are using Skype office hours or chat sessions to create a virtual community within the class.

Also, university policies and processes that are conducive to well-being are areas that can be addressed for both in person and virtual learning environments.

Conducting Assessments and Advocating for Policy Changes

Often times health assessment tools highlight deficits and illness instead of flourishing, resilience, happiness etc., which are related but not simply a mirror of each other. Conducting the National College Health Assessment (or similar survey) on your campus can be helpful for establishing a baseline assessment of student health-related behaviours and status. While this survey does not collect information on the underlying factors contributing to these behaviours (or assets that could be built upon), it can be used to make the case for action and help evaluate change over time. The Healthy Minds Study in the US is another survey tool of potential interest and if you are interested in demonstrating the value of investing in resources for mental health, you may find this Return on Investment Calculator useful.

In terms of examples of tools that explore some of the underlying or contributing factors, the Health Promotion team partnered with researchers in the Faculty of Health Sciences and a Health Science honours student to amend the Guarding Minds @ Work survey tool so that it could be validated for a university population. This tool has successfully been utilized within the workplace settings to determine how psychosocial risk factors (such as a balance, organizational culture and workload management) are linked to the mental health and well-being of employees. The 'Guarding Minds @ Work: A University Context' survey tool enables a better understanding of the psychosocial factors within the university context that are impacting student well-being in order to create new programs and approaches to address these determinants of health. For more information, see the article published in the September 2013 issue of Education and Health - *Building healthy campus communities: The adaptation of a workplace tool to understand better student wellbeing within higher education settings.*

Ultimately, when it comes to advocating for policy changes, building relationships with those involved early on in the process can be key in proposing and making policy changes at any level.

Maintaining Momentum and the Champions for a Healthy Campus Community Project

SFU Health Promotion is in its second year of recognizing Champions for a Healthy Campus Community. One of the criteria in selecting the champions however is sustainability and reach. The programs selected thus far are ongoing programs. When recognizing Champions for 2013 the team also continued to recognize the 2012 Champions. Each time the nomination process starts, the community will be referred back to previous champions. The intent is the videos created each year will act as motivators for others to take similar actions in creating a healthy campus community.

Insights from University of Central Lancashire

Establishment of the First Healthy University Coordinator Position in the United Kingdom

In the early 1990's an academic member of staff at University of Central Lancashire was involved in the WHO Health Promoting Hospitals pilot initiative and was instrumental in organizing an international symposium on 'the settings-based approach to health promotion' in 1993, in collaboration with WHO Europe. This prompted senior staff to consider how they could apply the settings approach to UCLan – and this led to a Senior Management Team decision to appoint a 0.5FTE Healthy University Coordinator post (combined with a 0.5FTE health promotion lecturer post, initially for 2 years). After 2 years, the position was made permanent.

Student Involvement

This has been variable, as it's obviously challenging to engage 30,000 students from across a multitude of disciplines and courses. A few highlights:
- Working groups have links to the student body via the Student Union representatives at the meetings.
- We've worked with a range of subject/course leaders to incorporate health and sustainability related themes into curricula, sometimes linking this to a particular event such as World Mental Health Day, World AIDS Day or National Green Week. Examples include photography students having a brief to produce an installation or advertisement and drama students producing a themed play, video production students creating videos for the student Headroom mental health website.
- Students have worked on their own dissertation projects and linked the research to the Healthy University.
- We established a volunteer programme for a peer outreach and education project focused on sexual health and drug use, working in student club nights. This subsequently was embedded and mainstreamed by being taken on by the University's Volunteer Coordinator, and linked to student credits for volunteering.
- A Health Champions programme has been set up within the University, which in its first term has attracted 34 student volunteers to work across a range of health themes.
- We offered students taking 'workplace' modules the opportunity to undertake their placements by working alongside the Healthy University Coordinator.

Identifying and Engaging "Champions"

Early on, this was based on getting to know individuals in strategically important positions. This has proved more difficult as the University has expanded and senior management has seemingly become more distant. It's proved important to identify 'academic' and 'service' (e.g. student welfare; human resources; environment, facilities and sustainability; catering) champions. Invitations to become involved in the Steering Group and Working Groups provides a formal way to engage with key positions and build relationships.

Environmental Sustainability and Health Agenda Examples

UCLan mapped the convergence of environmental/sustainability and health agendas. Key points of convergence offering opportunities for initiatives and interventions that both promote wellbeing and reduce carbon include:

-]Local and ethical food procurement – as part of an overarching and integrated 'Healthy, Safe and Sustainable Food Policy'.
- Green and active travel plan (promoting cycling and walking)

Additionally, UCLan sought to introduce a health dimension into the University's Sustainability strategy and action plan, so that people become more aware that climate change, biodiversity and carbon reduction are themselves public health challenges.

Integrating a Cultural and Diversity Focus

UCLan sought to bring together the University's commitment to equality and diversity with its commitment to health – and to emphasize that actions respecting cultural diversity and promoting equity are themselves health promoting.

Fostering Student Passion

UCLan has a strong focus on student identity and belonging, which is a key underpinning for student passion. Also, through the volunteer and engagement opportunities mentioned above, there is the potential for students to find a 'niche area' that resonates for them. (Note - they don't currently measure student passion, but would be interested in ideas as to how this could be done!)

On behalf of Healthy Minds/Healthy Campuses, thank you to the Simon Fraser University Health Promotion Team and University of Central Lancashire's Healthy Settings Unit for providing insight into these additional topics.