

Indiana State University

2005 - 2006 Administrative Annual Report

Student Counseling Center

Year in Review

Enrollment

What steps did you take this year to aid ISU in overcoming enrollment challenges?

As previously stated, the Student Counseling Center (SCC) has the fundamental mission of supporting the academic pursuit of ISU students and the mission of the Student Affairs Division. The SCC does this by establishing and maintaining as many counseling services and programs as possible to enhance students' abilities to live healthy and functional lifestyles and perform as close to their optimal abilities as resources allow. The SCC and its subsidiary, SHP, have made direct efforts towards the enrollment challenge by increasing awareness of services. Starting in the fall of 2004, and continuing at the start of each subsequent semester, the SCC has presented on available services to a large number of ISU classes. During the 2005-06 year SCC staff attended 163 classes, many introductory or core classes in both undergraduate and graduate programs. The SCC has also continued to present at Sycamore Advantage, Knowing Sycamores, and the Athletic Department's new student orientation. The result of these programs has been increased awareness, and utilization of SCC services. The SCC has also endorsed, through the Task Force on the First Year, a requirement for all ISU students to carry health insurance, which will improve the overall provision of mental health services to students.

Action Steps

Do you have any further progress you would like to report?

The SCC was extremely successful in expanding student awareness of and access to all of its programs, especially with the addition to the SCC staff of our Master's level Student Health Promotions Outreach Educator, Aimee Janssen-Robinson. The SCC continues to increase its contact with students and provision of services to students each year, but is approaching its maximum coverage ability with its present staff allocation. The SCC's continued focus is on providing coordinated academic and psychological support for "high-risk" and "in-crisis" students who come to the SCC and have succeeded in greatly expanding its service to these students as their numbers increase. The SCC assists these at-risk students in their studies and in managing their stress coping problems, thereby helping them to stay at ISU. The SCC also continues to treat severely disordered clients with more complex psychological difficulties. The SCC has either developed or assisted in the development of an Involuntary Medical Withdrawal Policy, a Self-Destructive Behavior Policy and implemented the Suicide Prevention Program, all to facilitate effective university risk management and cope with the rising incidence of suicide on college campuses.

Assessment

What are two ways in which you evaluated the quality or effectiveness in your area last year? What changes did you make based on those assessments?

The SCC evaluates the effectiveness of its services on the bases of statistical analysis of its overall operations and of client satisfaction assessed through feedback forms. The statistical analyses examine the total numbers of individual counseling and group counseling client contact hours and outreach contact hours and cross reference these numbers with client demographics to assess the effectiveness of the SCC in reaching sufficient numbers of students, sufficient diversity of students,

and a broad enough cross-section of students to meet the mission goal of enhancing students' academic experience and emotional life here at ISU. The SCC then compares its year-end numbers with the International Association of Counseling Services (IACS) National Survey of Counseling Center directors for the previous year to determine whether the SCC's performance is meeting the mean averages of a broad sampling of American Counseling Centers (both accredited and non-accredited) for mid-sized universities with student populations between 7500 and 15,000 students. The first statistical assessment provides the SCC with an evaluation of its year-to-year growth and performance in terms of its ability to reach ISU students and give them the types of services their traits and conditions demand. The second statistical evaluation provides the SCC with an assessment of whether or not it is adequately meeting national criteria for counseling centers in providing quality services. The client satisfaction surveys provide data on how SCC services are being received by students, covering areas such as initial front office contacts and appointment management, experiences with their assigned counselors, how the SCC services have affected their academic performance, and whether they would recommend services to others. Over the course of the past five years, the SCC has used these statistics to expand staffing, develop a group counseling program, enhance outreach presentation areas, develop an athletic consulting program, increase public relations presentations, redesign brochures, and alter clinical operations to provide more intensive and comprehensive clinical services to accommodate students' increased need for counseling and increased severity of disorders. The client feedback data allows the SCC to assess client counseling outcomes based on their own perceptions of the effectiveness of their experiences with the SCC. This data can be used to refine and improve service delivery in an ongoing manner. In FY 2005-2006, these data were used to provide the Unit Self-Assessment with information on the SCC's effectiveness in accomplishing its mission and efficiency in its use of resources. The result of the Unit Self-Assessment revealed that the SCC "fully met" the criteria for scope and accomplishment of its mission, and for efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of quality services to the students of ISU. At the time of this document, the Administrative Unit Review is not yet complete. However, preliminary goals and recommendations derived from this assessment process are:

- Improve the SCC's effectiveness by returning funding for the sixth staff counselor position to expand the scope of specialty services (Substance Abuse and Eating Disorders) and eliminate the long waiting lists the Center has each semester
- Increase funds to assist staff with development and training opportunities in core areas needed to manage increasing numbers of high-risk students and maintain best practice professional competency.
- Mandate that students carry health insurance and assess a health fee. This will assist Student Affairs in adequately funding overall health care for students at ISU (Health Center, Wellness Center, and Counseling Center). This system of funding would then allow hiring of a sixth SCC psychologist, employment of a half- or full-time psychiatrist, improve the overall technological data management at the Center (card swipes, etc.) and help fund a new facility for the three units in the future. This type of system is based on the budget appropriations seen at many universities such as Indiana University and UNLV.
- Finally hire a bachelor's level Health Educator (see previous for funds) to assist the SHP Coordinator in expanding health education services and build a full Wellness Center on campus.
- If funds become available, build a new facility for the Student Health Service, Student Counseling Center and the proposed Wellness Center, preferably co-located with the new Student Recreational Center to centralize all of the student-focused wellness activities and services.

Budget

As you know, ISU is facing significant budget challenges. Finding ways to overcome these while increasing efficiency requires innovation. How are you overcoming your budget challenges this year?

The SCC operated with extreme efficiency in 2005-06. Due to personnel losses that reduced the staff from six professional counselors and the director to four as the result of preceding budget cuts and

attrition, the Center's staff increased their respective caseloads over the IACS' recommended standard of 60% of work time. As a result of this voluntary increase and the additional efficiencies of group counseling and a new triage system, the SCC was able to see more students with less staff in this fiscal year. The addition of the IU Medical Center contract psychiatrist enabled the SCC to serve more students needing medication treatment. Further, the contract psychiatrist, with the able assistance of the SCC front office personnel, were able to get pharmaceutical companies and their drug representatives to provide sufficient free medications (either through the Patient Assistance Program for from free samples) to completely cover the needs of the ISU students who did not have insurance or resources to afford medications (about 90% of our clients). This saved the SCC considerable monies that were designated for the purchase of psychotropic medications. The SCC was also very careful to manage the budgets for psychiatric costs and for contract psychologists and thereby maintain a budget reserve that can be applied to next FY's psychiatry and other contracting expenses. In addition, the Associate Director and the Health Educator were able to cut purchasing costs for display and give-away materials for health and wellness tables and expositions to maintain a budget reserve for the SHP as well. As a result, the SCC was able to fund the upcoming renovation of its waiting room and offices to complete the final stage of the office renovations that began in 2001.

Strategic Initiatives

Development Activities

What role might your unit play during the silent phase of the comprehensive fundraising campaign?

The SCC and SHP are instrumental in assisting ISU students in coping with their non-academic responsibilities at ISU in several ways: · We provide primary interventions in the form of individual counseling, group counseling, crisis intervention, and assessment. · We provide secondary interventions in the form of preventative education for students (workshops), training of student peer advisors (e.g., Bacchus and Gamma), and training of student affairs staff to better help students. · We provide tertiary interventions by implementing quality healthy lifestyle informational programming to campus residents. The SCC also contributes to the local and regional community through referrals to community agencies, involvement in community wellness events, and through the general provision of services. Increasing social interaction and community involvement are basic tenets of therapeutic interventions for mood and adjustment disorders. The SCC commonly helps students engage in available resources within the community. These functions provide students the support they need to thrive socially, encourage students to mix socially with a diverse population of their peers, and enable students to learn social, emotional, and academic coping skills. These contribute to students' life knowledge, skills, and personal development and thereby contributing to the ISU community, as well as the larger communities in which the students live and work.

Future Goals

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Have you considered any action steps your department could make to enhance Indiana State University's reputation as a University of choice? If so, please indicate what you are planning to do and tell us which area of planning your steps fall under.

The SCC is essentially a private, confidential counseling service. At present, we also serve as an educational service through our preventative outreach programming. Our primary function, however, is oriented towards individuals. As such, our contribution to the university is mainly through the enhancement of students' lives. Not only does this influence the students' immediate coping abilities, but it enhances students' abilities to reach their full potential and appreciate their college

experience. It also has an extended effect on the institutional environment (IE) of the university by creating positive, involved student representatives of ISU, who, in turn, positively affect those around them on campus and in the community. The SCC's other primary means of enhancing ISU's reputation is through experiential learning (EL). The SCC serves as a training facility for ISU graduate students in Psychology who are in the process of becoming professional psychologists, and for co-op students from the Community Health program at ISU. We will continue to provide these opportunities.

Feedback

This box is to allow you to share any ideas you have on enhancing enrollment, dealing with budget, challenges facing the administration, etc.

The SCC pushes students to develop the discipline, maturity, and balance to be better students and live healthier lives. The SCC advocates that the university, as a whole, and the faculty, as well, become part of this program to facilitate overall student development, to enable students to thrive in college and become effective contributors to their communities after graduation. Emphasizing the following ideas in their contacts with students can facilitate student Development: · Reinforce the original goal of parenting – to “raise independent human beings.” · Force youths to confront their own mediocrity in facing life and build strong identities. · Give them the reassurance and confidence through experience in success and failure; and reinforce that they are hardy and can handle real life disappointments and high standards of work. · Let them flounder a bit and learn from it but don't abandon them. · Give them the emotional support and the counseling when needed and reinforce that they can figure out things for themselves. · Reinforce one of the major goals of Higher Education – to help young people develop the capacity to think for themselves – in the classroom, residence halls and social settings. As part of Student Affairs, the SCC is a major advocate for providing a higher quality of life and college experience to promote future success. Our goal is to see ISU gain a better reputation as a preeminent undergraduate university and thereby compete on an even level with all of ISU's peer institutions.