

1 Title: **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF GREATER RESOURCES AND**  
2 **COORDINATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR STUDENTS**

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10 Resolution Number: 07. 15-16

11  
12 WHEREAS Interim Provost Gerald Baldasty in an email to the student body on January 20, 2016  
13 declared, “Behavioral health promotion and suicide prevention are among our top priorities” and  
14 explained that “mental health and substance abuse are among the most cited reasons college  
15 students don’t complete their degrees”<sup>1</sup>; and

16  
17 WHEREAS “mental health” in this resolution refers broadly to behavioral health, substance  
18 abuse and dependence, and psychological well-being; and

19  
20 WHEREAS the University of Washington (UW) is a source of not only academic support for  
21 students, but also a source of support for their physical and psychological health and well-being;  
22 and

23  
24 WHEREAS an increasing number of undergraduate and graduate students nationwide are  
25 experiencing mental health disorders, and UW students are experiencing higher rates of anxiety  
26 and depression<sup>2</sup>; and

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28 WHEREAS the increasing nationwide demand for mental health services on university campuses  
29 is growing much faster than institutional enrollment<sup>3</sup>; and

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<sup>1</sup> Baldasty, G. & Suite, D. Retrieved from  
[http://engage.washington.edu/site/MessageViewer?em\\_id=193213.0&dlv\\_id=185722](http://engage.washington.edu/site/MessageViewer?em_id=193213.0&dlv_id=185722).

<sup>2</sup> Sarah Ketchen Lipson, Sasha Zhou, Blake Wagner III, Katie Beck & Daniel Eisenberg (2016). Major Differences: Variations in Undergraduate and Graduate Student Mental Health and Treatment Utilization Across Academic Disciplines, *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy*, 30:1, 23-41, DOI: 10.1080/87568225.2016.1105657; correspondence with Hall Health staff.

<sup>3</sup> Center for Collegiate Mental Health. (2016, January). 2015 Annual Report (Publication No. STA 15-108). Retrieved from [http://ccmh.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3058/2016/01/2015\\_CCMH\\_Report\\_1-18-2015.pdf](http://ccmh.psu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/3058/2016/01/2015_CCMH_Report_1-18-2015.pdf).

31 WHEREAS increased mental health services on university campuses have been demonstrated to  
32 increase the proportion of students graduating<sup>4</sup>; and

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34 WHEREAS approximately one-half of college students nationwide reported “overwhelming  
35 anxiety in the last year” and one-third reported “difficulty functioning in the last 12 months due  
36 to depression,” according to a nationwide 2013 survey<sup>5</sup>; and

37

38 WHEREAS the UW has lost 18 students to suicide between 2008 and the present, and graduate  
39 students are at greater risk of suicide<sup>6</sup>; and

40

41 WHEREAS depression among adults in the United States is a growing concern, and the U.S.  
42 Preventive Services Task Force recommends that all adults be screened for depression<sup>7</sup>; and

43

44 WHEREAS the Counseling Center saw 29% more students during the last three years, which  
45 was a faster rate of increase than the national average increase of 29% over five years<sup>8</sup>; and

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47 WHEREAS there has been a 79% increase in students with psychological disability or mental  
48 health disorders supported by the Disability Resources Service (DRS) over the last 5 years; and

49

50 WHEREAS the UW currently provides services for all students through Hall Health and the  
51 Counseling Center; the Hall Health website lists 14 staff dedicated to mental health, including 3  
52 psychiatrists, 1 psychologist, and 5 therapists<sup>9</sup>; and the Counseling Center website lists 13  
53 clinical staff<sup>10</sup>; and

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55 WHEREAS the undergraduate and graduate student body at the UW Seattle campus is more than  
56 43,000 students, and the ratio of clinical staff at both Hall Health and the Counseling Center to  
57 students is approximately 1 : 1,592; and

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<sup>4</sup> Ashwood, J. et al. (2016, December). “Campus Programs Increase Proportion of California College Students Receiving Mental Health Services, Yielding a Positive Financial Return as more Graduate.” RAND Corporation. Retrieved from <http://www.rand.org/news/press/2015/12/10.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Novotney, A. (2014, September). “Students Under Pressure.” *American Psychological Association*. Vol. 45, no. 8. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/monitor/2014/09/cover-pressure.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> Office of Vice President of Student Life.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Preventive Services Task Force | Final Recommendation Statement: Depression in Adults: Screening. Retrieved from <http://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/Page/Document/RecommendationStatementFinal/depression-in-adults-screening1>

<sup>8</sup> Correspondence with UW Counseling Center staff.

<sup>9</sup> Hall Health Center | Mental Health. Retrieved from <http://depts.washington.edu/hhpcweb/project/mental-health-clinic/>

<sup>10</sup> Counseling Center | Counseling Center Staff. Retrieved from <https://www.washington.edu/counseling/internship/counseling-center-professional-staff/>

59 WHEREAS guidelines for counselor to student ratios on university campuses are approximately  
60 1 : 1,500, but these guidelines have not been updated in several decades and do not reflect  
61 increasing rates of mental health disorders and demand for services on campuses as well as  
62 decreasing stigmatization; and

63

64 WHEREAS the current staffing levels limit the number of students that can be seen at both Hall  
65 Health and the Counseling Center<sup>11</sup>; and

66

67 WHEREAS the School of Medicine and School of Nursing have counselors for the exclusive use  
68 of their students and provide drop-in appointments that do not require advanced scheduling; and

69

70 WHEREAS 16 biomedical graduate education programs are either housed in or affiliated with  
71 UW Medicine, but only medical students in the School of Medicine can access these exclusive  
72 counseling services; and

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74 WHEREAS SafeCampus, Disability Resources Service (DRS), Health and Wellness, and other  
75 services on campus coordinate mental health services for students through the Counseling Center  
76 and Hall Health; and

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78 WHEREAS in addition to the aforementioned offices, professionals and educators at UW  
79 Medicine, Peer Health Educators, UW Police Department Victim Advocates, the Title IX/ADA  
80 Coordinator, and the UW Mindfulness Project are continually engaged in efforts to promote and  
81 enhance mental health in the UW community; and

82

83 WHEREAS the distinction between the mental health services provided by the Counseling  
84 Center and Hall Health is not clear from the websites of both; and

85

86 WHEREAS students have voiced difficulty or frustration accessing mental health services at the  
87 UW; and

88

89 WHEREAS the average wait time between a student's first contact and intake appointment at the  
90 Counseling Center usually ranges from 10 days to two weeks, but can reach up to four weeks  
91 during the busiest times of the year<sup>12</sup>; and

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93 WHEREAS the current waiting time at Hall Health is 7 weeks<sup>13</sup>; and

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<sup>11</sup> Correspondence with Hall Health staff.

<sup>12</sup> Correspondence with Counseling Center staff.

<sup>13</sup> Correspondence with Hall Health staff.

95 WHEREAS graduate students, in particular, can feel isolated from mental health services and  
96 have greater difficulty accessing them while also being exposed to unique stressors, which most  
97 undergraduate students do not experience; and

98  
99 WHEREAS students on the UW Medicine South Lake Union (SLU) Campus have particular  
100 difficulty accessing Hall Health or the Counseling Center; and

101  
102 WHEREAS the Graduate and Professional Student Senate believes strongly that increased  
103 mental health services will improve the success and wellbeing of both graduate and  
104 undergraduate students and strengthen the UW community; now

105  
106 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT  
107 SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON:

108  
109 THAT the UW allocate greater resources for mental health and counseling services for students;  
110 and

111  
112 THAT the UW administration provide a 2- to 5-year plan describing how it will hire more  
113 clinical staff for both Hall Health and the Counseling Center to provide services for a greater  
114 number of students, reduce the average wait time for appointments, and provide a greater number  
115 of walk-in appointments both for students in crisis and not in crisis but seeking therapy; and

116  
117 THAT the aforementioned 2- to 5-year plan describe how the UW administration will more  
118 effectively coordinate mental health services, and better communicate these services to  
119 undergraduate and graduate students; and

120  
121 THAT representatives from each unit providing mental health services meet periodically to  
122 discuss common interests and concerns to promote greater communication and collaboration  
123 amongst mental health professionals (the frequency and setting of the aforementioned meetings  
124 to be determined by the representatives); and

125  
126 THAT Hall Health and the Counseling Center provide services for students on the UW Medicine  
127 SLU campus location; and

128  
129 THAT the UW initiate a strategic messaging campaign to better communicate and advertise  
130 mental health services to administrators, staff, and faculty and encourage them to communicate  
131 these services to students during student orientation and throughout the year; and

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133 THAT the UW also focus the strategic messaging campaign on graduate and undergraduate  
134 students during, but not limited to, new student orientations and the three weeks preceding finals  
135 each quarter; and

136  
137 THAT the UW create an easy-to-access and navigate webpage dedicated to mental health  
138 services that outlines all services available on campus and helps students identify and access  
139 appropriate services<sup>14</sup>; and

140  
141 THAT both Hall Health and the Counseling Center provide annual data to the UW community  
142 including the number of students seeking services, the number of students receiving therapy, the  
143 average number of therapy appointments students receive, and the average wait time for an  
144 appointment; and

145  
146 THAT copies of this resolution be sent to UW President Ana Mari Cauce; UW Board of  
147 Regents; Vice President of Student Life Denzil Suite; Assistant Vice President for Student Life  
148 Ellen Taylor; Provost and Dean of the Graduate School David Eaton; Associate Dean for  
149 Postdoctoral and Student Affairs Kelly Edwards; Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs Ed  
150 Taylor; Counseling Center Director Natacha Fu Kune; Hall Health Executive Director Mark  
151 Jenkins; Hall Health Mental Health Unit Head Rachel Gerkin; Health and Wellness Director  
152 Shannon Bailie; GPSS President Alex Bolton, ASUW President Tyler Wu; ASUW-T President  
153 Sophie Nop; ASUW-B President Dominick Juarez; SafeCampus Manager David Girts; DRS  
154 Director Bree Callahan; Title IX/ADA Coordinator Kate Leonard; Peer Health Educators  
155 Director Allison Messenger; UW Mindfulness Project Director Alysha Greig.

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157 Presented to the GPSS for approval on May 18, 2016

158 Approved on May 18, 2016

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<sup>14</sup> This website could be similar to the “Health HUB” website explored by Hall Health several years ago.