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Linking Health Promotion and Student Success: Advanced Session

**ACHA Health Promotion Section
Member Development Committee Conference Call**



**Presented by:
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Columbia University in the City of New York**

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Session Objectives

At the conclusion of the session, participants should be able to:

- 1) Define three potential measures of student success in higher education.
- 2) Define the role of health promotion in supporting student success in higher education.
- 3) List six strategies for linking health promotion with student success.
- 4) List three strategies for communicating and institutionalizing links between health promotion and student success.

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A Moment of Reflection

“The success of any great moral enterprise does not depend upon numbers.” – William Lloyd Garrison

“We should encourage health to serve as the broad, multi-layered category that it is, involving both content and analysis, both mind and body, and both our curricular and co-curricular lives.” – Wm. David Burns

“A little learning is a dangerous thing.” – Alexander Pope

Why Link Health Promotion with Student Success?

- It is in the *Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education*. (ACHA, 2004)
- It is an expectation of staff as outlined in the *Guidelines for Hiring Health Promotion Professionals in Higher Education*. (ACHA, 2008)
- We can do some measurement using the *Framework for Assessing Learning and Development Outcomes*. (CAS, 2006)

Why Link Health Promotion with Student Success?

- We are one of the last parts of college health to connect (after primary care, counseling, etc).
- Support the move from health (sick) care to healthier populations (individual to ecological).
- Support institutional goals (retention, etc).

*“Health promotion...[is] the third
'mainstay' of traditional college health
practice.”*

- Patrick, Grace, & Lovato 1992

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Why Does This Matter?

- Health promotion (and health services in a broader context) are seen as auxiliary to the purpose of the institution.
- We've historically focused on services as defined by process measures instead of outcome measures (busy does not mean successful).
- We've not always seized the opportunity to engage key stakeholders (including students).
- We've done a poor job in self-advocacy with regard to our mission-driven purpose.

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Why Does This Matter?

- We must be sure to recognize that classroom learning is only part of the institutional mission.
- We've not fully embraced the student development and human development theories that compliment the work of health promotion.
- Many people come to this work from a health-related academic preparation route – thus missing the exposure to student development and higher education administration concepts, theories, and practices.

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Defining Student Success

- Most common measure available is grade point average (GPA).
- We must include other measures, including:
 - Time to completion of degree
 - Retention/student departures before degree completion
 - Number of incompletes/dropped classes
 - Measured co-curricular learning (SLOs)

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Interesting Considerations

- Absenteeism vs. Presenteeism when addressing student success
- Risks of not doing this work
- Rewards of the connections
- Difficulty in making the case
- Moving from auxiliary to essential

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Decision-Making and Priorities

Priorities may be determined by:

- Data-Driven Decision – quantitative or qualitative data that support priorities
- Mission-Driven – selecting priorities that reflect commitment to and support for the organizational mission
- Relevance to Higher Priorities – related the directives, this strategy is based on the need to support efforts of a higher level part of the organization
- Perception – a stated need that may not be supported by other data (includes emergent needs and anticipated needs)
- Higher-Level Impact – some priority issues cannot be justified with process measures as the true impact is often unknown or under reported.
- History – a program continues to exist because it has become core to the unit operations
- Directives – a mandate given from a source of authority to provide a program or service

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Implications for Practice

1. Research & tracking of health behaviors and academic success measures (GPA, etc)
 - Can be measured with common instruments like the ACHA-NCHA or CORE survey
 - Consider partnership with academic department or research office

Example:

Using the ACHA-NCHA, Example University has learned that stress is the leading health-related barrier to student academic performance.

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Implications for Practice

2. Research linking unsuccessful students & health-related factors

- Look at students that fail to complete a degree program and conduct research to identify contributing and/or causal health-related factors (health behavior, health choices or health status)

Example:

Conduct surveys or focus groups with students that fail to complete a degree, receive incompletes, and/or drop a course to assess health-related factors.

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Implications for Practice

3. Including academics in the vision/mission statements for college health programs (and HP specifically)
 - Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education (#2)

Example:

Recognizing that health is a vital part of learning, Alice! works to create and sustain a healthy campus community in which students can achieve their personal and academic goals.

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Implications for Practice

4. Curriculum infusion health promotion strategies

- Traditional Curriculum Infusion
- “Don’t Cancel That Class”
- Required health courses
- Not just topic presentations
- Focus on creating a healthier campus community through academic integration

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Implications for Practice

5. Linking health promotion with the General Education goals of the institution.
 - Demonstrating a link between faculty teaching responsibility and health promotion programs and services.
 - Provides an alignment between health promotion and the academic mission of the institution.
 - Measuring student learning outcomes (SLOs) associated with co-curricular experiences.

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Implications for Practice

6. Including health/healthier communities in the institutional mission

Example:

University of Virginia – University Mission/Goals – Number 6

To seek the ablest and most promising students, within the Commonwealth and without; and, in keeping with the intentions of Thomas Jefferson, to attend to their total development and well-being; and to provide appropriate intellectual, athletic, and social programs.

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Broad Learning Expectations

- FALDO/CAS framework (6 learning domains)
 - Knowledge acquisition, construction, integration, and application
 - Cognitive complexity
 - Intrapersonal development
 - Interpersonal competence
 - Humanitarianism and civic engagement
 - Practical competence

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Learning Outcomes

To what extent has your experience at Columbia University contributed to your development in the following areas?

Acquiring a broad general education

Communicating effectively

Thinking critically or analytically

Working effectively with others

Solving complex real-world problems

Developing a personal code of values and ethics

Contributing to the welfare of your community

Developing a deepened sense of spirituality

Practicing healthy behaviors

Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds

Understanding yourself

Learning effectively on your own

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What is Social Marketing?

“Social marketing refers to the application of basic marketing principles to the design and implementation of programs and information campaigns that advance social causes such as alcohol and other drug prevention”

(Higher Education Center for Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention, 1997).

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Communicating with Others

Three concrete strategies for communicating this message to others (establish links)

- Mission Driven (and not just the learning mission)
- Involves key stakeholders (including students) – change agents, key informants
- Evidence- and Theory-Informed practice (not just health behavior theory)

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Getting Started

- Identify institutional goals, priorities, and objectives.
- Seek collaborative partners and build mutually supportive working relationships.
- Develop vision and mission statements that are focused on, and inclusive of, supporting student success.
- Self-advocacy based on the mission-driven purpose of your functions.

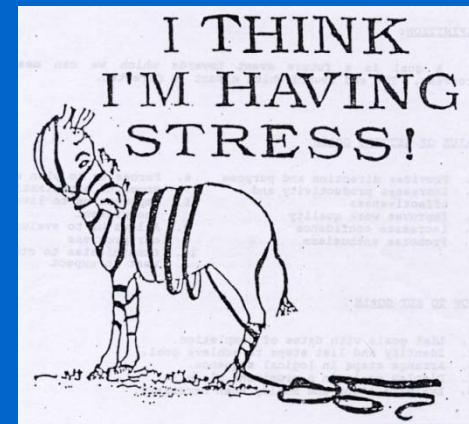
Communicating & Institutionalizing

- Add SLO questions to existing surveys – this will help develop a data set that can illustrate the connections between health status, health behaviors, and student success.
- Establish collaborative relationships with campus stakeholders that are engaged in efforts to retain students (NSSE, Academic Advisors, Students, FYE, Faculty Senate).
- Articulate an evidence- and theory-informed base for health promotion initiatives.

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This is Hard Work!

- You may need to continue “business as usual” while making the case for change.
- It’s not easy, but the strategies that have worked are available.
- Each campus will be different. Know and embrace this challenge.
- It takes time!



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Your Questions

Can you address how we can promote or sell this concept (health promotion and student success) to the administration of the universities. I know those of us in the health field all believe it is a critical piece to student success but I am not sure we have the buy in from the administration.

What have been your biggest obstacles to student involvement in and administrative support for promoting health related issues on campus and how did you overcome them? How were students then able to view health as something they should care about at this phase of life and make changes in behavior now to impact their health in the future?

We hope that this teleconference will address small colleges (our institution is 1100 students) where there are only 1 or 2 nurses on staff, and we do not have separate health educators (we ARE the health educators in addition to doing patient care). Also, can you help us make the link between health promotion and retention?

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Your Questions

What are your thoughts on the AAC&U LEAP project that details elements that contribute to high impact student success?

What is the citation for your definition of student success?

What is your citation for the definition of student learning?

How are you partnering with others on campus to meet his student success objectives?

What process does he use to select which initiatives will receive priority based on limited funding?

Who on your campus is leading the way in providing evidence that their programs and services are contributing to student learning outcomes, retention, graduation, and career success?

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