



# UWindsor Student Mental Health Strategy

## Steering Committee Meeting

May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

Centennial Room, Vanier Hall

2:00 – 4:00 pm

**Present:** Dr. Douglas Kneale, Dr. Mohsan Beg, Kerry Gray, Dr. Debbie Kane, Francine Herlehy, Katie Chauvin, Sameena Sultana, Jessica Tetreault, Jennie Atkins, Kat Pasquach, Prof. Jeff Berryman, Jennie-Lee Almeida (CMHA), Denice Shuker, Ryan Flannagan

**Regrets:** Dr. Dusty Johnstone, Dr. Linda Patrick, Dr. Patti Weir, Ashley Vodarek, Yadwinder Singh, Eric Sternberg, Healey Gardiner, Emily Stadder

### Introduction

- Introductions by group members.
- Ryan indicated that this potentially could be the final Steering Committee meeting.
- Reviewed agenda with invitation to bring forward any matters that might be missing – none noted by committee.

### Overview of Work to Date

- Ryan provided an overview of Strategy development process to date:
  - *February/March 2017* – Mohsan brought together a large group and individuals signed up for recommendation development working groups.
  - *Summer 2017* – first batch of recommendations were developed by working groups and then narrowed down by small subcommittee – took out duplicates and recommendations that were out of scope.
  - *Fall 2017* – focused on expanding consultations with students – conducted three student focus groups with students from specific populations, implemented a campus-wide student survey where students were asked to rank ~80 recommendations and provide additional insights, met with student unions to gather additional feedback.
  - *January 2018* – Ranked recommendations and new student ideas were presented to Steering Committee, along with a significant amount of student feedback validating the process and expressing gratitude for the work.

- *February/March 2018* – In order to further narrow recommendations, a subcommittee was struck by volunteers from the Steering Committee along with three new faculty members brought forth by Dr. Kneale. Pared recommendations down to 43 and made some adjustments to language of recommendations. This work resulted in the document we have in front of us presently (referencing recommendation draft document sent to Steering Committee via email prior to today’s meeting).
- In comparison to strategies at other universities, our recommendations are in line with theirs. There is inherent crossover between institutions because we are following the CACUSS guide; however, the exercise itself is unique to each institution, and there are many things that are specific to the University of Windsor. We did a very good job of consulting with students and gathered meaningful, robust student input. It will never be perfect, but we have a lot of good input and are feeling confident with where we are. We can go into today’s exercise knowing we are in line with other universities, and that we have done a really good job of consulting with students.
- Mohsan noted that he appreciated the subcommittee going through and hashing out each recommendation – important issues were covered, and what wasn’t included was put into the parking lot document. He noted that there are still opportunities for input, and that the draft Strategy will be opened to the community for input once recommendations have been finalized.

#### **Overview of Recommendations Sub-Committee Methodology**

- Ryan reviewed methodology of how recommendations were selected by sub-committee:
  - Group met as many times as was required (5). Each session was the full two hours and conversation was focused, comprehensive, and ensured that everyone was heard (~10 hours of work).
  - Some members were able to attend each of the sessions, but majority attended from three to five.

#### **Overview of Recommendations and Discussion**

- Ryan indicated that we would proceed through the draft recommendation document (with CACUSS framework image) by section, rather than recommendation by recommendation. Group feedback was invited.
- Note: All numbers referencing recommendations align with the original draft document that was discussed in the meeting, not the updated draft that has been sent out with these minutes. With

the deletion and addition of recommendations between drafts, numbering differences now exist.

### ***Policies & Procedures***

- Douglas suggested that there is some repetition between sections (e.g. spaces on campus) – consider consolidating a few? Debbie noted that the sub-committee was aware, but felt that these things were critical and decided to leave it for the Steering Committee to look at with fresh eyes in order to determine where these ideas could be condensed or if everything should be there.
- Francine stated that some of the recommendations became content for a preamble and asked if that content has been finalized yet. Ryan – no, but we are going to go back and look at these comments to make sure they are incorporated.
- Douglas brought the group’s attention to the phrase “professor sensitivity” in recommendation #1 – concern that this may not be well received. Group decided to keep the recommendation higher level and remove the second sentence altogether.
  - **Action Item:** Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - **Status:** Complete
- Referring to recommendation #2, Jeff inquired if it would be appropriate to just refer this to the Academic Policy Committee (APC) instead of forming a new subcommittee. Group discussed the importance of ensuring that those involved in this review process aren’t working in a vacuum and are well-informed by those who have been involved in the Strategy and that student voices are represented.
  - **Action Item:** Jeff will develop language for this recommendation.
  - **Status:** Complete. Updated language provided by Jeff (May 4, 2018):
    - Request the Academic Programs Committee of Senate to establish a subcommittee, to include knowledgeable representatives from student mental health services and student advising, with a mandate to explore current policies and practices around late voluntary withdrawal, appeals, tuition for students taking 4 vs. 5 courses, and academic designations (e.g., Aegrotat standing) as they relate to student mental health, and where deemed appropriate, develop updated policies and practices to ensure that there is a balance between academic fairness and compassion.
- Francine in reference to recommendation # 5 – last section implies it’s optional to participate in review – “As offices participate” rather than “Offices that participate.” Douglas suggested – “Over each of the 5 years, *HAVE* at least” – make sure to use imperatives throughout. Wording suggestions to be updated in draft recommendations document.
  - **Action Item:** Katie to ensure these adjustments are made.
  - **Status:** Complete.

- Douglas noted the difference between using the words mandatory vs. encouraged and how we need to make sure we are being purposeful about their use. Debbie shared that the sub-committee was very careful about the use of the word mandatory, and in the recommendations where it felt too strong to use, they went with encouraged.
- Jennie suggested that we should identify and summarize somewhere in the document which committees and subcommittees will be needed for Strategy implementation. Group decided that in the section of the preamble that outlines specific roles, to also include this discussion.
  - *Action Item*: Ryan to ensure this is added to preamble.
  - *Status*: In progress.
- Discussion on recommendations relating to having accessible mental health services on all campuses:
  - Douglas – recommendations #4, 8, 11, 12, 35 – all about making sure same services are offered on all campuses – should we merge into one or is there value in having them separate? Kerry- if we merge them all together, where to do put the overarching recommendation so that it doesn't get lost. Jessica – they are talking about space but in different ways. Debbie - is this a preamble thing? Group decided that it is, and to make similarity of services a guiding principle.
    - *Action Item*: Ryan to ensure this is added to preamble's priority issues section.
    - *Status*: In progress.
  - Ryan – keep 4, 35, 8, 12, remove 11.
    - *Action Item*: Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
    - *Status*: Complete.
  - Kat emphasized the need to make sure that Indigenous supports are available across all campuses as well. Ryan indicated the potential to bring main campus services to downtown. Kat discussed the need for a central cultural space – not necessarily a dedicated space, but somewhere that is culturally available; Ryan suggested keeping the current recommendation (#12) and that the overarching theme of space across campuses could be applied. Douglas stated that we need to decide what are mental health issues vs. what are cultural supports that the University can provide beyond the Strategy. Kat stated that being able to be practice culture is a huge part of mental health. Ryan suggested developing language in the preamble that meets needs of all without making a hard commitment to things that could harm the relationship between University and Indigenous populations if not achieved (e.g., space and structural realities in buildings could prevent some recommendations from being achieved).
    - *Action Item*: Ryan and Kat to work on language for this together.
    - *Status*: In progress.

- Kerry – maybe we need to engage the downtown community to see what is available for students to access to practice their cultures.
- Katie on behalf of Dusty – with respect to some of the higher level recommendations, if specifics are not spelled out, how will we foster accountability? How are we operationalizing these recommendations? Ryan – recommendations are broad for a reason, and the people who are assigned to do the work will be tasked with getting the specifics – this builds agility into the Strategy; The implementation process will be for more specificity – when you start to operationalize, there are requirements to have a specific approaches; as you bump up to higher/macro level, it becomes by their nature the recommendations have to be more broad generally. Don't want to get too caught up in operationalizing right now.

### ***Campus Environment***

- Francine – Wording removal suggestions for recommendation #9. Remove first half of first sentence in recommendation #10 through to “develop...”
  - **Action Item:** Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - **Status:** Complete.
- Denice asked if we should combine recommendations #9 and 40? Group decided not to, but rather to remove the last sentence of #40.
  - **Action Item:** Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - **Status:** Complete.
- Kat suggested current wording should change for recommendation #12. It says to support and deliver other wellness and cultural programming, but you can't have that without smudging. Having a designated space for smudging to happen is more important than having it in Turtle Island. Important to have stronger language around smudging – we had this space (to smudge) before and it was taken, so we need to state strongly that smudging will happen. Ryan expressed understanding, also noted that factors need to be taken into account like the architecture of the space for ventilation purposes. Discussion around whether or not it is possible to make this happen in the next five years.
  - **Action Item:** Ryan and Kat to work on language for this recommendation together.
  - **Status:** In progress.
- Jennie stated that with respect to language of campuses, connection between off-site and main campus is a struggle, hard to create community – need language to encourage this.
  - **Action Item:** Ryan and Jennie to work on language for this together.
  - **Status:** In progress.

- In reference to recommendation #4, Douglas asked if we looked at students who are taking classes online courses. Katie replied that the focus has been on students at off-campus locations, but not specifically those taking online courses.
- Mohsan raised the possibility that there are three recommendations within recommendation #9... should we split this up? Francine – good point – we may not have a wellness centre soon, but we do have a hub and spoke model. Group decides to keep it together.

### **Awareness**

- Francine suggested recommendations #13 and 27 could be consolidated – move 27 up to 13. Group confirmed change.
  - *Action Item:* Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - *Status:* Complete.
- Jennie asked if we can use stronger language to commit to a recommendation that will ensure all students who are new to campus are oriented? Fewer things are being done now than before – CEPE does it really well and has a ton of research showing that it helps. Debbie – we have an orientation, but only 1/3 of students show up. Kerry – provide orientation face to face and in alternate formats. Need to build orientation in for grad students too. Need a dedicated orientation – no shaving of budgets. Ryan – we will do a top quality job of making sure that all students are oriented to the University because we know that X Y and Z are outcomes of orienting students. Suggestion to replace “first year” with “all students.” Mohsan noted that first year was intentional - they are a priority, coming in when they’re 17 - need to address other years, but not at the expense of first years students. Ryan suggested we create two recommendations – one focusing in on first year and one focusing on grad/other students landing on campus.
  - *Action Item:* Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - *Status:* Complete.
- Douglas noted that recommendations #14, 15, 16 are talking about three separate campaigns. Maybe 14/15 can be combined? Ryan – awareness/resilience, anti-stigma, + staff sensitivity – they are three different things, which is why they are separate. Mohsan suggested using different words than “campaign”. Edit suggested for alternate wording was “initiative”.
  - *Action Item:* Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - *Status:* Complete.
- Kat recommended that the implementation committee should all go through mental health/sensitivity training to ensure a baseline understanding of issues. Suggestion to make this a foot note on this recommendation #6.

- *Action Item:* Ryan to decide how best to incorporate this into the Strategy.
- *Status:* In progress.

### **Early Identification**

- Katie on behalf of Dusty – why was ACT awareness removed? Ryan answered that it’s too specific and we want to leave the priorities of what gets promoted to the people who are tasked to deliver the strategy. Francine suggested we add it in to the recommendation to hire designated case manager “who can increase awareness”. Group Agreed.
  - *Action Item:* Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - *Status:* Complete.
- Mohsan suggested we remove “conflict of interest” point on case manager recommendation. Katie indicated that this was a remnant from the research that was used to hold the recommendation up through the selection process, but likely wasn’t needed in the final document. Group agreed to remove.
  - *Action Item:* Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - *Status:* Complete.
- For recommendation #19, Jeff suggested the language of “mandatory” might be an issue, as there is no practical way to force faculty to take the training. “Occasional” is also not best wording. Discussion around best wording for this and the best way to approach the training. Jennie-Lee suggested step-up training, Francine suggested maybe implementing the training as optional to start and building from there, Mohsan reminded the group that Simon Frasier made their training mandatory to start. Ryan posed: should we be bold, believe in the Mental Health Strategy, and make sure everyone is committed... or should we implement as optional and assess uptake after five years. Mohsan put forth the question: what is the purpose of the document? We want to change culture. Can you force it, or do you have to nudge people in that direction? Maybe we have to develop a campus community and build culture around it. When we surveyed the campus three years ago, the overwhelming response was that we wanted more training. Douglas suggested that we put the mandatory training recommendation out there for community consultation and see what the reaction is.
- Group decided to remove the Safe Space sticker concept from this recommendation. Debbie noted how it’s important that if implemented, stickers should only go to those who are committed to being safe and supportive.
  - *Action Item:* Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - *Status:* Complete.

- In reference to recommendation #21, Francine asked if this is the same as building an online presence? Katie responded that it's different – one is for general mental health info, the other is for skill development. Noted that Recommendation 21 should be under Skill Development.
  - *Action Item:* Katie to ensure this adjustment is made.
  - *Status:* Complete.
- Group ended with the agreement to meet again to finalize the remaining recommendations. Until then, thought should be given to whether or not we want to propose mandatory mental health training for our campus.

**Next Meeting:**

Tuesday, May 22

2:00 – 4:00 pm

Centennial Room, Vanier Hall