



IBHE-FAC FACULTY MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE GUIDE

Dr. Nataka Moore and Dr. Susan D. Wiediger

Context and History

- In 2019, the working group on student mental health was charged with addressing the possible impact of the **Public Act 101-0251: Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act (2019)** on our campuses.

- **Public Act 101-0251: Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act (2019)**

In Section 5: This act is intended to address gaps in mental health services on college campuses across Illinois, including both 2-year and 4-year institutions through training, peer support, and community-campus partnerships.

Section 10: Findings:

About 75% of all mental health conditions start by age 24, with higher rates of diagnosed disorders in college-age students. College Counseling believes that health conditions among students are increasing, signaling a growing issue that must be addressed.

Between 2007 and 2017, the diagnosis rate of college students increased from 22% to 36%, indicating a higher need for services. Treatment Rates over the same period increased by 15%.

Goals and Rationale:

Illinois general assembly—Full text of public act 101-0251.

<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/fulltext.asp?Name=101-0251>



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

And then COVID...

- **According to the Center for Collegiate Mental Health in examining 43,098 college students across 137 counseling centers from (7/2020-11/2020):**
 - 94% reported that COVID has negatively impacted at least one area of their life
 - 72% reported that COVID has impacted their mental health
 - 67% reported loneliness and isolation due to COVID

Center for Collegiate Mental Health. *Part 1 of 5: Covid-19 impact on college student mental health*. (2021, Feb 2). Retrieved March 3, 2023, from https://ccmh.psu.edu/index.php?option=com_dailyplanetblog&view=entry&year=2021&month=02&day=01&id=9:part-1-of-5-covid-19-s-impact-on-college-student-mental-health

And then COVID...

- **According to Son et al. (2020) Effects of COVID-19 on College Students' Mental Health in the United States**
- In a study of 195 students at a large university in the United States
 - 71% of the students reported increase distress as a result of COVID due to worries about health of loved ones, isolation, decreased opportunity to concentrate, sleep disruptions.

Son C., Hegde S., Smith A., Wang X., Sasangohar F. (2020) Effects of COVID-19 on College Students' Mental Health in the United States: Interview Survey Study. *J Med Internet Res*, 22(9):e21279. [https://doi: 10.2196/21279](https://doi.org/10.2196/21279)



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC

A photograph of a signpost with several directional signs. The signs are white with black text and are mounted on a dark pole. The signs visible are: 'ADVICE' (top left), 'HELP' (top right), 'SUPPORT' (middle right), 'TIPS' (middle left), 'ASSISTANCE' (bottom left), and 'GUIDANCE' (bottom right). The background is a clear blue sky.

The research supports the conversations we had as faculty in our meetings with colleagues in our home institutions and in our IBHE FAC meetings.



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](#)

IBHE Open Letter on the Mental Health Action on Campus Act

- **Concerns:**
 - Due to budget constraints as well as the intervening COVID-19 pandemic, the provisions of the act have not yet been implemented.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic has not just worsened existing mental health issues in individuals, like depression or anxiety, but has also strained the state of Illinois' mental health infrastructure, leaving patients vulnerable.
 - These factors make fiscal and legislative support of this bill even more urgent.

Recommendations:

- In the area of peer support, we recommended incorporating a *peer-mentoring* program that resides within residence hall programs and or/college counseling centers.
- In the area of health care ratios, we recommended developing a plan that creates a minimum access of standard physical and mental health care for all students in place of a standardized ratio of counselors to students.
- In the area of the technical assistance center we support the appointment of an IBHE position due to their expertise in data handling, and the connections to the universities.
- We also believe that the bill should include support of telehealth options by insurance

Recent Illinois Actions

- Governor Pritzker added supplemental funding to support the provisions of the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act
 - IBHE is setting up the Technical Assistance Center
- Creation of Behavioral Health Workforce Center (<https://illinoisbhwc.org/>) as announced by Governor Pritzker (<https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.26148.html>)



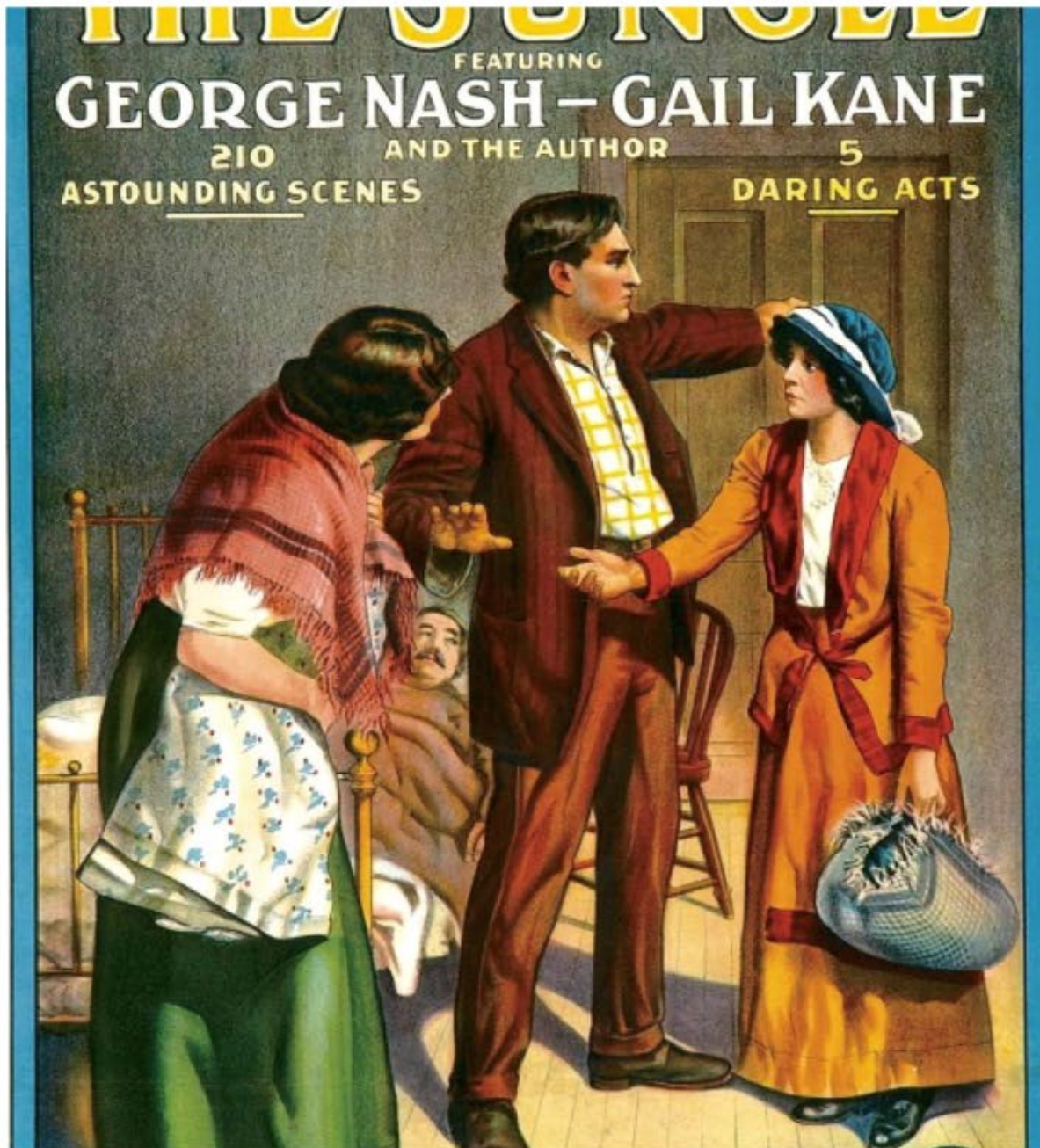


What We Noticed...

- **We talked quite a bit about our student's mental health needs and how our institutions are addressing the needs of students.**

However...

- **We did not talk much about how our (faculty) mental health was addressed in our institutions.**
- **We reported that faculty were also suffering but discussing anything deeper than that got diverted to student mental health.**



The Jungle by Upton Sinclair

- Powerful story of labor conditions
 - Physical hazards of work
 - Genesis of unions
 - Policies related to permissible exposure to hazards, i.e. child labor laws, the OSH Act
- Potential to link physical hazards of work to similar hazards at work related to mental health issues

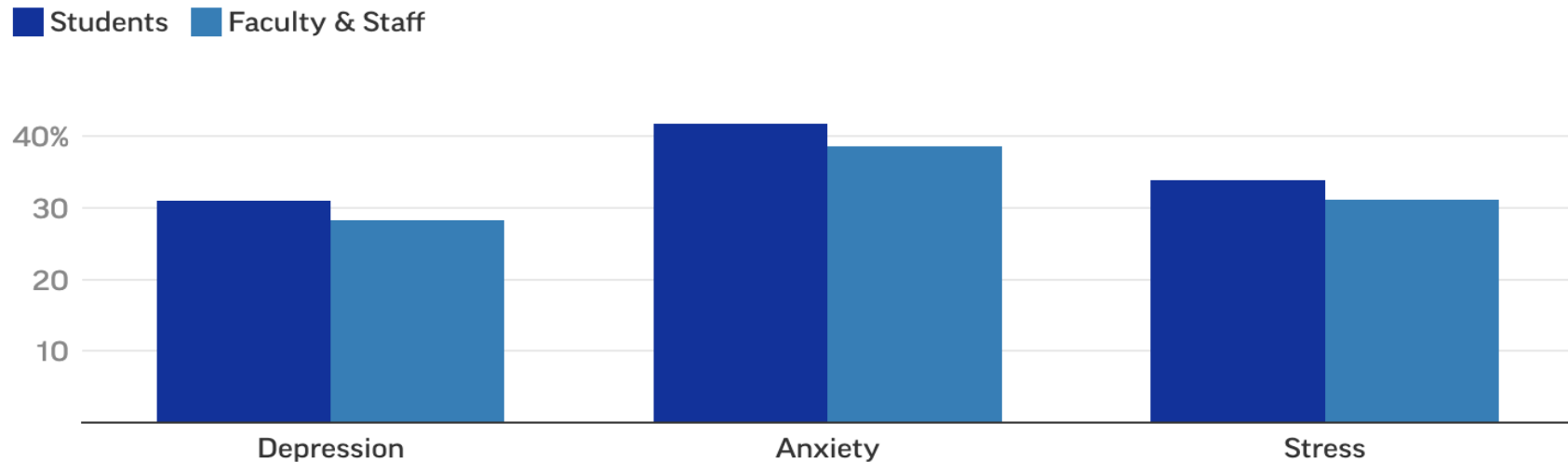


Research on Faculty Mental Health

Rationale for Addressing Faculty Mental Health

Faculty, Staff & Students Have Mental Health Concerns

A 2023 survey shows nearly matching rates of severe depression, anxiety and stress among college students and faculty and staff.



Source: [Journal of American College Health](#)



Flannery, M. E. (2024, Mar 7). *The mental health crisis among faculty and college staff* | nea. Retrieved March 15, 2024, from <https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/mental-health-crisis-among-faculty-and-college-staff>

- Occupational stress, also known as work-related stress or work stress, has been studied for decades.
- Various theoretical frameworks
 - High levels of demand with low levels of autonomy or control
 - Misalignment between job requirements and the needs or goals of the individual
- Traditionally, academic faculty positions were regarded as low stress
 - Tenure, choice of work, flexibility, etc.

Occupational Stress

"...if academic work has become stressful, it must be because the nature of the work has changed"

-Anthony H. Winefield
(p.437)

Occupational Stress Factors

Occupational stress variables

- Intrinsic job factors (e.g. heat, shiftwork)
- Work relationships
- Organizational role
- Career prospects
- Organizational structure/climate
- Home/Work Interface

(Cooper 1983, 1985, as cited by Kenny, 2000)

Some specific sources of faculty stress

- High self expectations
- Securing financial support
- Insufficient time to keep current
- Inadequate salary
- Preparing manuscripts
- Heavy workload
- Interference with personal life; unsatisfactory career advancement; interruptions; meetings

(surveys of US universities by Gmelch et al. as cited by Winefield, 2000)

Over the past twenty years, studies and surveys have explored the changing nature of academic work and stress.

2019 special section on Well-Being in Academic Employees in the *International Journal of Stress Management*

Among the factors discussed:

- Increased workloads
- Reduced resources such as job control, support, and role clarity
- Diverse nature of academic work
- Public nature of work and increased scrutiny of performance
- Conflict

Burnout research suggests university teaching staff are now similar to highly stressed groups such as health care professionals.

Kinman, G., & Johnson, S. (2019). Special section on well-being in academic employees. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 26(2), 159.



“Burnout is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion resulting from a prolonged response to long-term exposure to demanding situations.” (Sabagh, Hall, and Saroyan 2018)

Three dimensions:

- Emotional exhaustion
- Depersonalization or cynicism
- Perceptions of reduced accomplishment or efficacy

This is still an emergent field, with studies on specific populations and a lack of a comprehensive theoretical framework and longitudinal information.

One study since the pandemic (Docka-Filipek and Stone, 2021) also highlights potential intersectionality issues, and how pandemic stress and the stresses on specific identity groups can exacerbate burnout risks.

Burnout



Solutions to organizational stress and burnout can focus on the individual or the institution.

Exploring both options is appropriate, since the costs of the consequences are experienced at both levels.

Conclusion

- There have always been challenges to faculty mental health per the literature review pre-COVID.
- After COVID, there has been a growing awareness that mental health should be considered.
- Campus focus has been on students (by administrators and faculty).
- There is a gap, a lack of language, to conceptualize faculty work experiences and how they directly relate to mental health and wellness.
- If these issues are not addressed, we will continue to see the exodus of faculty from higher ed due to burnout. Faculty are the backbone of higher education. Faculty mental health needs to be prioritized by our institutions, IBHE, and legislators to ensure a thriving Illinois!

Conversation Starters for Large or Small Groups

Choose those that apply for your session

1. What are the occupational mental health hazards associated with the faculty profession?
2. Does the institution prioritize student mental health over faculty mental health?
3. Do faculty engage in self care and other practices that promote mental health?
4. What are next steps the college/university can take to address faculty mental health?
5. How are faculty mental health needs tied to institutional goals?
6. What are the resources on campus for faculty to address their mental health needs?
7. How might faculty mental health be integrated into strategic plan at the university level, IBHE, level, and state government as it related to a Thriving illinois?
8. How might demographic identities/master status/intersectionality impact faculty burnout?

Conversation Starters for Large or Small Groups

Choose those that apply for your session

9. How does the university assess for burnout amongst faculty?
10. How is burnout amongst faculty understood at the leadership level?
11. What are the outcomes for faculty who experience burnout? Is it met punitively or with compassion?
12. What resources or supports have the university invested in to decrease burnout and increase positive engagement with work-related tasks and responsibilities for faculty?
13. How does the university budget support faculty and academic departments beyond faculty/student ratio?
14. What outcome data would be necessary to assess the effectiveness of solutions?
15. Are there professional “hazards/stressors” particular to the culture of your school? Do we prepare prospective new faculty for these “hazards/stressors” in the hiring process to ensure goodness of fit?

Additional Web Resources

1. Gewin, V. (2021). Pandemic burnout is rampant in academia. *Nature*, 591(7850), 489–491. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-021-00663-2>, retrieved April 18, 2024 from <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-00663-2> (includes tips for managing faculty burnout)
2. Jacobson, S. (2021, Apr 28). *How to support employee mental health*. Lab Manager. Retrieved April 18, 2024, from <https://www.labmanager.com/lab-health-and-safety/how-to-support-employee-mental-health-25759> (includes links to frameworks of psychosocial workplace factors)
3. Wotapka, D. (2023, February 8). *How to avoid, spot, and deal with academic burnout*. Journal of Accountancy., retrieved April 18, 2024 from <https://www.journalofaccountancy.com/newsletters/academic-update/how-to-avoid-spot-and-deal-with-academic-burnout.html> (a conversation with Dr. Rebecca Pope-Ruark, author of [Unraveling Faculty Burnout: Pathways to Reckoning and Renewal](#))
4. Chessman, H. (2023, May 18). *Effective strategies for combating faculty burnout*. Higher Education Today. <https://www.higheredtoday.org/2023/05/18/effective-strategies-for-combating-faculty-burnout/> (blog post with links to webinars and discussion of themes; links to resource such as [ACUE](#) and survey sources)
5. Flannery, M. E. (2024, Mar 7). *The mental health crisis among faculty and college staff* | nea. Retrieved March 15, 2024, from <https://www.nea.org/nea-today/all-news-articles/mental-health-crisis-among-faculty-and-college-staff>

Additional Web Resources Continued...

6. Ted Talk: Nagoski, E. N. and Nagoski, A. (April 2021). *The cure for burnout (Hint: It isn't self-care)*. https://www.ted.com/talks/emily_nagoski_and_amelia_nagoski_the_cure_for_burnout_hint_it_isn_t_self_care/ (two sisters discuss burnout from care provider and sufferer perspectives)
7. Ted Talk: Oxley, T. (1531751579). *Workplace Mental Health—All you need to know (For now)*. https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_oxley_workplace_mental_health_all_you_need_to_know_for_now (includes management roles and impact of responses to employee needs)
8. Ted Talk: Packer, G. C. (March 2022). *Gloria Chan Packer: Work is not your family*. https://www.ted.com/talks/gloria_chan_packer_work_is_not_your_family_jan_2022 (includes practical advice for re-drawing boundaries)
9. Peter Lougheed Leadership College. (2020, February 19). *#ualbertacares | staff & mental health*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqNyKLeEQFs> (faculty and staff video from series of videos about mental health created by undergraduate students at the University of Alberta)
10. Hammoudi Halat D, Soltani A, Dallli R, Alsarraj L, Malki A. Understanding and Fostering Mental Health and Well-Being among University Faculty: A Narrative Review. *J Clin Med*. 2023 Jun 30;12(13):4425. doi: 10.3390/jcm12134425. PMID: 37445459; PMCID: PMC10342374. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10342374/> (narrative review article on faculty mental health)