

ANNUAL REPORT 2022 - 2023

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER
STUDENT AFFAIRS • THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH





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UCC MISSION STATEMENT



We support student well-being and success by facilitating and supporting the educational mission of the University of Utah. We provide developmental, preventive, and therapeutic services and programs that promote the intellectual, emotional, cultural, and social development of University of Utah students. We consistently strive to integrate multiculturalism into the everyday functioning and structure of our agency, including the individual, service, training, organizational, and administrative

levels. We advocate a philosophy of acceptance, compassion, and support for those we serve, as well as for each other. We aspire to respect cultural, individual and role differences as we continually work toward creating a safe and affirming climate for individuals of all ages, cultures, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, languages, mental and physical abilities, national origins, races, religions, sexual orientations, sizes and socioeconomic statuses.

UCC SERVICES



Clinical

- Individual Counseling
- Group Therapy
- Relationship Counseling
- Support Groups
- Psychiatric Services
- Crisis & Single Session



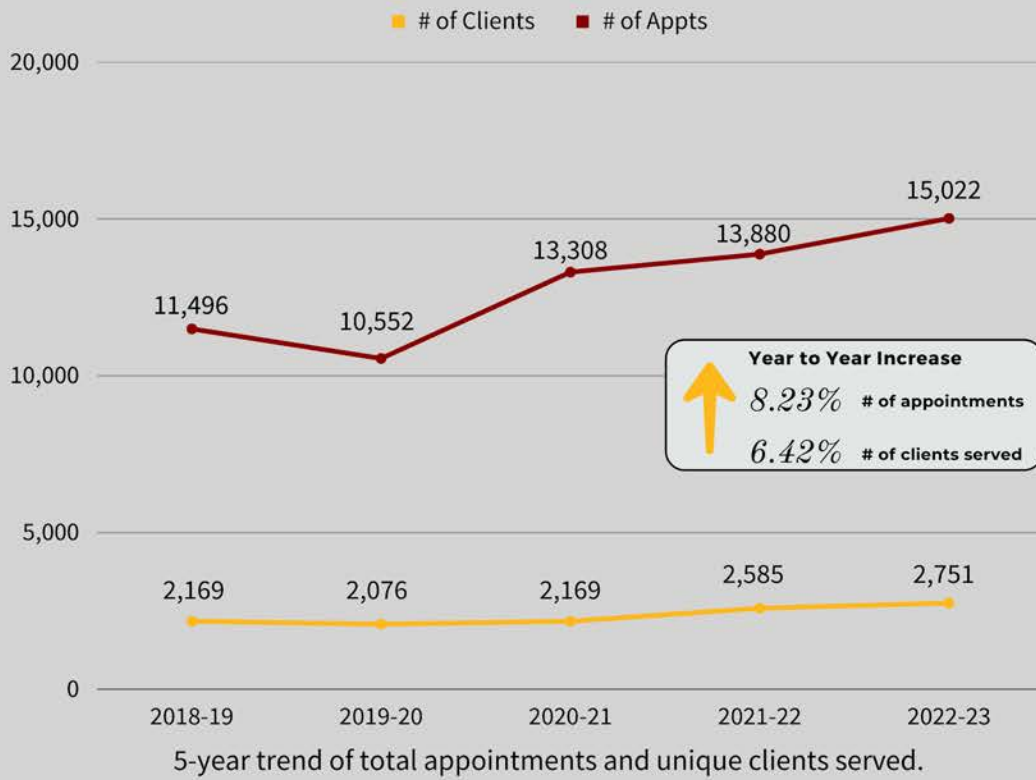
Training

- APA Pre-doctoral Psychology Internship
- MSW Internship
- Counseling Psychology PhD Practicum



Programming & Outreach

- Skills Workshops
- Monthly campus wide outreach events
- Mental Health Peer Educators
- Outreach Presentations
- Tabling Events



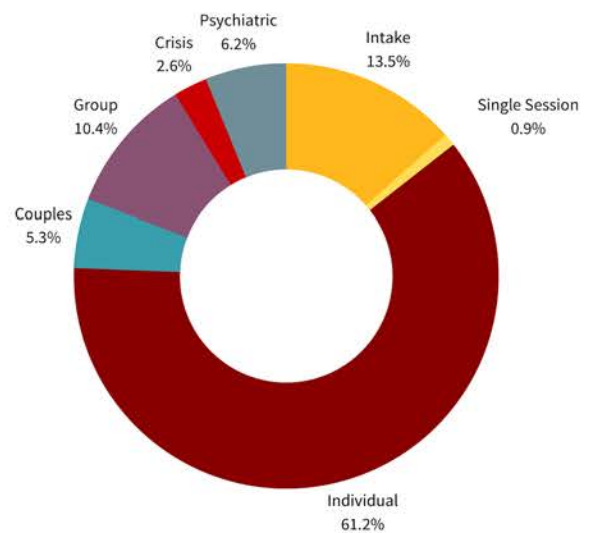
Clinical Services

A primary function of the UCC is to provide clinical mental health services to students.

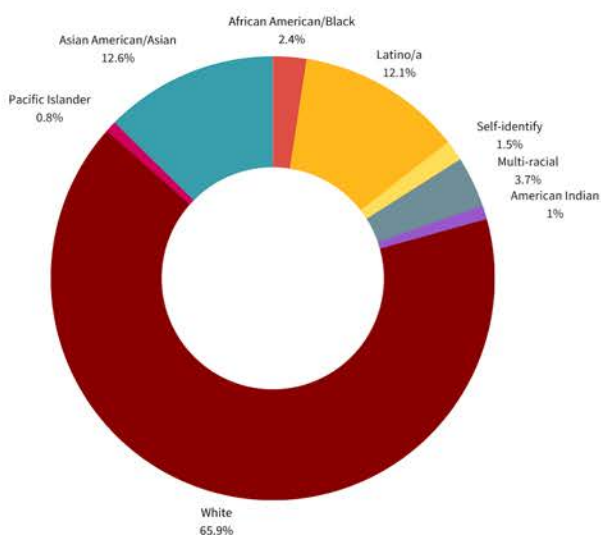
Services include:

- Individual Counseling
- Group Therapy and Support Groups
- Relationship Counseling
- Psychiatric Services
- Crisis & Single Session

Both number of students served and total appointments increased compared to last year.



Breakdown by type of appointment provided

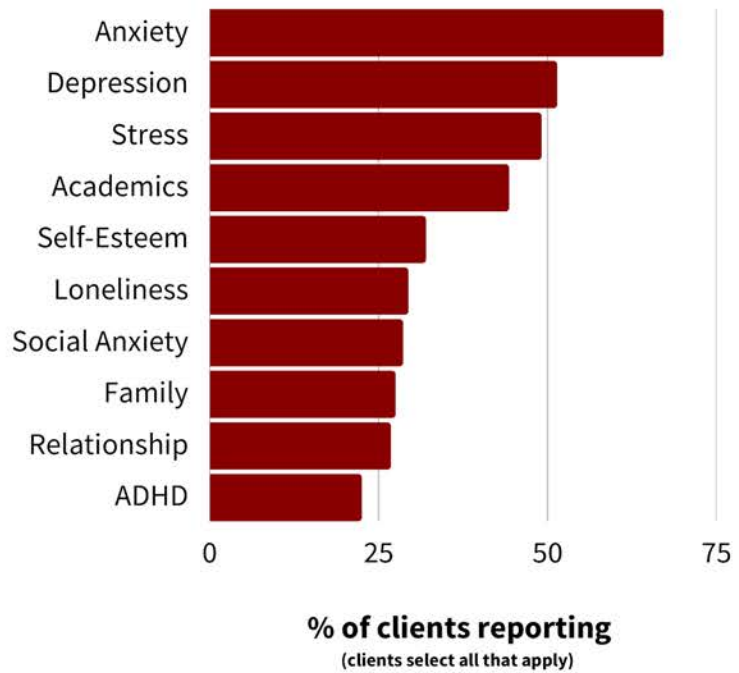


Race/Ethnicity of Students Served

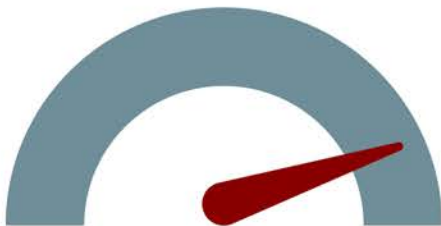
The UCC is a multidisciplinary agency staffed with licensed clinicians and trainees, including:

- Psychologists
- Licensed Clinical Social Workers
- Clinical Mental Health Counselors
- Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
- Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioners

Top 10 concerns reported by UCC clients



Client Satisfaction



Students rate the quality of UCC services at every clinical session using the Alliance and Multicultural Survey (AMS). On a scale from 0 (worst possible counseling) to 10 (best possible counseling), the average rating was 8.7, indicating very high overall satisfaction.

Student Impact



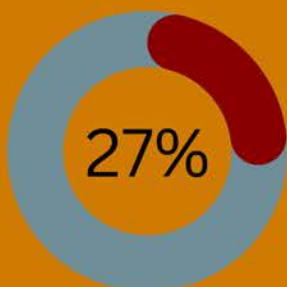
On average, student's overall mental/emotional distress levels decreased by 22% over their course of treatment at the UCC, as measured on the Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS) at intake and each clinical session.



Training

The UCC has a long standing training program, including a Predoctoral Psychology Internship that has been continually accredited by the APA since 1979. In addition, the UCC serves as an internship site for Masters of Social Work students, and a practicum site for Social Work, Counseling Psychology and Clinical Psychology. During 2022-23, over 15 trainees were part of the UCC.

UCC's commitment to training not only expands clinical capacity but also helps prepare the next generation of college student mental health professionals.



% of total appointments provided by UCC trainees



Programming and Outreach

Programming and Outreach is an integral part of UCC services that support student mental health and wellbeing. The primary goals include:

- Promoting awareness of UCC services
- Educating the campus community on recognizing when a referral to UCC is appropriate
- Extending the therapeutic impact of UCC services
- Promote and support campus wellness initiatives

Services in this area include:

- Outreach presentations and tabling
- Mental Health Awareness Programming
- Skills, Workshops and Mindfulness programs
- Mental Health Peer Educators (starting Fall 2023)

237

Outreach presentations provided

6,533

Individuals attended an outreach presentation

219

Students attended a Skills Workshop

Skills, Workshops and Programming Offered:

- Drop-in Mindfulness Sessions
- Cultivating Connection
- Trauma Triage
- Taming Stress
- Building Resilience
- Mindful Authentic Living
- Interpersonal Effectiveness
- Mental Coaching for Success
- Mindful Work/Life Balance
- Red Flag Project
- Black Mental Health: A Guide to Healing
- Latinx Mental Health Workshop Series
- Therapy Dogs

STATUS OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

During 2022, the University Counseling Center was undergoing multiple transitions and leadership changes. The former Director, Lauren Weitzman, PhD, retired from the center during the Spring 2022 semester. Following her departure, two staff served in the Interim Director role, while the Associate Vice President for Student Health & Wellness was also in an interim period. During this time, a search for a new Executive Director was also underway. As a result, specific strategic initiatives were not identified at the beginning of the year. Please see Major Accomplishments for a summary of significant initiatives and developments that subsequently occurred during the 2022-23 Academic Year.



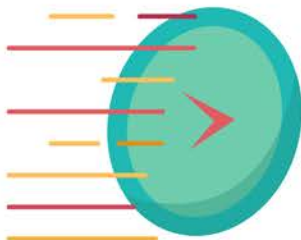
MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Stepped Care Model

In Summer 2022, the UCC adopted the Stepped Care Model. In this approach, students are assessed on intake for the best appropriate level of service, taking into account presenting concerns, individual factors and service availability. Collaboratively, intake counselors work with the student to 'match' them with the appropriate service. This may include recommending a UCC Skills Workshop, direct referral to group therapy, individual counseling, psychiatric services, or transfer of care to the community or other campus resources. This has allowed students to have faster access to appropriate support and UCC services.



Single Session / Quick Care



Introduced in Fall 2022, Single Session (initially known as Quick Care) appointments were made available to students. These appointments, offered daily, are a one-time only meeting with a counselor that do not require extensive intake paperwork. They are ideal for students that present with a brief, particular concern, or ambivalence seeking mental health services.

Single Session appointments are not appropriate for students in acute crisis, or that may be seeking continuing services. For this academic year, 125 students completed a single session appointment.

Wait Time Reduction

With the adoption of the Stepped Care Model, and the introduction of Single Session offerings, the UCC significantly reduced the average wait time for an initial appointment. For 2022-23, most students waited between 2-5 days, compared to over 9.5 days the previous year.

56%

Reduction in wait time for
an Intake Appointment

24/7 Virtual Care



After August 1, 2023, MySSP will be known as TELUS Health

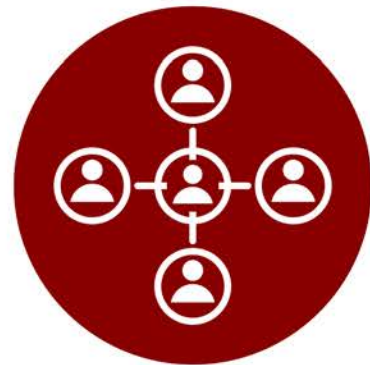
Beginning in Fall 2022, the UCC adopted the LifeWorks MySSP Virtual Care platform. This service provides a UofU branded app allowing students to access self-help mental health resources, on-line chat, telephone support, telemental health, crisis services and referrals to in person counseling. There is no charge to students, and it is available 24/7 around the globe. Services are available in multiple languages.

Since inception, approximately 135 students accessed telemental health services through MySSP. Of these contacts, 42% occurred after hours.

Revised UCC Organizational Structure

The UCC organizational structure has traditionally been flat, with all staff administratively reporting to the Director, with two Associate Directors having functional oversight responsibilities. As the UCC expanded and grew over the years, this structure was no longer effective, creating issues around communication, staff support, accountability, and responsiveness.

In consultation with the VP for Student Affairs and the AVP for Student Health & Wellness, the UCC organizational structure was modified. This included the creation of an Executive Director position, the elevation of two Associate Directors to Director level positions, and the creation of new Associate Director positions. The expanded leadership team aligns more fully with the primary functions of the UCC, provides greater staff support, allows for a more collaborative shared leadership model, and provides career advancement opportunities for interested staff.



MAJOR CHALLENGES

Recruitment and Retention of Clinical Staff

Difficulties in the recruitment and retention of counseling center clinical staff has continued to be a significant challenge. In a nationwide study, over 68% of college counseling centers have been experiencing increases in staff turnover, the highest level ever measured. However, recruitment of clinical staff has also become increasingly challenging, with 74% of centers reporting not having adequate number of qualified applicants, and 55% responding that a job offer was declined due to low salary. At the beginning of the 2022-23 year, the UCC was fully clinically staffed. However, by the end of year, there were several vacancies with ongoing job searches. It is imperative that the University of Utah consider additional financial resources in order for the UCC to continue to effectively meet the mental health needs of students, particularly as the overall enrollment continues to grow.

SOURCE:

Gorman, K.S. & Scofield, B.E. (2022). Why counseling center staff are leaving and why we should take notice. Association for University College Counseling Center Directors.
https://www.aucccd.org/assets/documents/CCMH%20Blog1_FINAL2.pdf



Clinical Capacity

A direct consequence of difficulties in recruitment and retention of clinical staff is increasing constraint on clinical capacity. The Center for Collegiate Mental Health (CCMH), with support from the Association of University and Counseling Center Directors (AUCCCD) and the International Accreditation of Counseling Services, Inc (IACS), has developed the Clinical Load Index (CLI) to estimate a center's clinical capacity, providing an index and measure of 'clients per standardized counselor'. The higher the CLI, the greater clinician caseloads and the less capacity that is available. Higher CLIs often necessitate a reduction in scope of services, along with increasing wait times and greater staff burnout. A center with a lower CLI typically is able to offer a wider range of mental health services, can be more responsive to student needs, and have shorter wait times.



For the 2022-23 year, the UCC CLI was calculated at 122, across 22.6 standardized counselors. For Fall 2023, the estimated CLI is 152, which is higher than 88% of schools in the distribution, across 18.4 standardized counselors. While significant improvements in students served and wait time to intake were seen in 2022-23, there is concern that these improvements will not be sustainable into the next academic year and, as a result, students will see a decrease in access to the UCC.

For more information about the Clinical Load Index, visit <https://ccmh.psu.edu/cli>

Space

The UCC has been located in the Student Services Building (SSB) since 1986 with minimal increases in available office square footage, despite an increase in staffing. Fortunately, with the departure of the Career and Professional Development Center from SSB in Summer 2023, an additional 4 private offices have been allocated to the UCC. This will allow clinical staff that had been office sharing (which was possible during the pandemic, but with the return to more in person services has become problematic) to move into their own office, and allow for the addition of 1-2 clinical staff members. However, space needs will need to continue to be monitored as student enrollment increases.

Budget Limitations



The UCC is financially supported by state funding along with a proportion of the student mental health fee. Over 99.6% of the total UCC budget is comprised of staff salary and benefit costs, leaving very minimal budget for operational expenses. Prior to the pandemic, the UCC non-personnel budget was subsidized by client fees, testing center profit, and course revenue. Several changes have occurred over the past 2 years that has eliminated these funding sources. To increase access for students, most client fees were eliminated. In addition, the testing center was separated from the UCC organization and the courses co-taught with the Career and Professional Development Center were discontinued. Without securing ongoing funding to support operational expenses, which continue to increase each year, it may be necessary to divert vacant salary funding lines, further impacting UCC clinical capacity and ability to recruit and retain staff.

NEW/CONTINUING STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Mental Health Peer Educators

The Mental Health Peer Educators (MHPE) program launches in Fall 2023. This new program will initially consist of two undergraduate students working closely with UCC staff in providing mental health focused programming and outreach. The MHPEs, in partnership with other campus offices (e.g., CCW, MH1, HRE, WRC) will engage the campus community in discussions of mental health with the aim of addressing common clinical concerns (e.g., distress tolerance, emotion regulation, anxiety, motivation, social disconnection), improving social-emotional skills (e.g., problem-solving, values-based decision-making, distress tolerance, sitting with ambiguity) as well as preventative initiatives (e.g., suicide, interpersonal violence, sexual assault). This collaborative campus engagement will emphasize a more holistic approach to health and wellness for college students, with aims to increase student engagement with campus resources and overall student success.

Adapting to Student Needs SA Strategic Plan alignment- Students Perspective: Increase Awareness & Access and Improve Meaningful Connections & Belonging

Policies & Procedures

Over the past 3 years, the UCC has undergone significant transitions and changes, particularly in procedures and policies. The current Policies & Procedures manual is outdated and inaccurate. An effort is underway to revise and update the UCC Policy & Procedures manual. In addition to revisions and updates, the new manual will be fully electronic, increasing access for staff, and will have the ability to be more dynamically updated. The scope of the manual will be expanded to include a wider range of UCC procedures.

Adapting to Student Needs SA Strategic Plan alignment- Internal Processes: Improve Management & Practices and Improve Strategic Communication

Initial Consultation Model

Starting in Fall 2023, the UCC will pilot a new Initial Consultation Model. This new approach to initial contact will replace the existing system of an Intake Appointment as the first contact for all students. Instead, the primary first contact will occur during an "Initial Consultation" appointment. These brief, streamlined appointments with a UCC clinical staff member will provide greater access, quicker assessment, and more rapid referral to the appropriate UCC, campus or community resource. It will complement the Stepped Care Model implemented during the 2022-23 year. The Initial Consultation appointment will require less initial paperwork, while directing students that need a more in depth assessment to the appropriate service.

Adapting to Student Needs SA Strategic Plan alignment- Students Perspective: Increase Awareness & Access

UCC Website Revision

In conjunction with the Policy & Procedures manual revision and update, the UCC Website will also be updated and revised to better reflect current services and processes. This will include content updates, as well as navigation and visual enhancements. An effort to better align the UCC website with division wide student health and wellbeing resources and services will be emphasized.

Adapting to Student Needs SA Strategic Plan alignment- Students Perspective: Increase Awareness & Access

Staff Compensation Analysis

As mentioned previously, recruitment and retention of clinical staff is a primary concern. Compensation is a primary contributing factor to this challenge. In collaboration with the U of U Human Resources, a comprehensive staff compensation analysis will be conducted. This will include an expanded analysis of comparable higher education institutions, internal university positions, independent practice settings and community agency compensation.

Adapting to Student Needs SA Strategic Plan alignment- Organizational Capacity: Improve Staff Experience

