

ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024

This is the 65th Annual Report of the University of Maryland Counseling Center. Directed by Dr. Chetan Joshi, the Counseling Center provides comprehensive support services that promote the mental health, personal, social, and academic development and success of University of Maryland students. The 2023-2024 academic year marked 85 years of service to the University of Maryland community.





Mission Statement

The Counseling Center supports the University's mission "to foster the education, critical thinking, and intellectual growth of its students, the creation and application of new knowledge, the economic development of the State, and effective engagement of its students, faculty and staff with the surrounding world."

To advance the University's mission, the primary focus of the University of Maryland Counseling Center is to provide comprehensive and effective psychological, career, academic, and assessment services to meet the personal, developmental, mental health, and educational needs of its diverse student body. We strive to uphold the highest standards of the University, the Division of Student Affairs and our profession for ethical and responsible service delivery.

Our dedicated professionals support the academic mission of the University through consultation, outreach, and partnerships with faculty, staff, administrators, parents and other key stakeholders. The Counseling Center staff value and are engaged in on-going educational activities and experiences to enhance their knowledge-base and multicultural capacities. We provide services and programs that are inclusive, and give voice to the varied experiences of students by providing a safe place to be heard, appreciated, and accepted.

The Counseling Center promotes the values of the university and the profession, through research, teaching, and supervised training opportunities for emerging professionals.

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Key Accomplishments and Notable Events: Counseling Center

Accomplishments

1. The clinical system and staffing was reimagined to allow for greater differentiation of function with attending focus on increased communication, leading to a system that is on its way to integration. Specifically, the Center now has an Initial Access Team (IAT), an On-Going Care Team (OCT), MHEART team, Embedded Services Team, and a Care Management Team.

2. The IAT program was fully implemented. The benefits of this program are

- Expanded access for students into the Center's clinical system (increased from 70 scheduled initial assessments/ week to 140 scheduled initial assessments/ week)
- Introduction of new treatment modalities such as single session therapy
- Greater capacity to manage urgent drop in appointments
- Greater clinical capacity on the OCT leading to shorter wait times for routine care (average wait time for routine care did not exceed two weeks and the maximum number of students on our assignment was 35 as compared to 120 in the past).

3. One MHEART clinician was hired and the MHEART co-responder program will officially launch in fall 2024.

4. Emergency mental health transport procedures were completely and successfully revamped allowing for

- Students experiencing mental health crises to be transported to emergency departments without the use of handcuffs unless they were deemed necessary due to non-compliance, aggressive and / or out of control behavior.
- Students experiencing mental health crises to be transported in a nondescript van instead of a police car unless that was deemed necessary due to non-compliance, aggressive and / or out of control behavior.

5. Three embedded clinicians were hired, one each for the School of Engineering, College of Information, and a joint position shared between the School of Journalism and the School of Public Policy. The Embedded Clinical Services program will officially launch in fall 2024.

6. Market salary analysis was conducted and all clinicians and administrative staff were given salary increases to bring their salaries into a competitive range.

7. A renovation costing over 1.6 million dollars was undertaken on the second floor of the Shoemaker Building to convert the now closed Testing Center into twelve offices for our expanded team of mental health clinicians.

Key Accomplishments and Notable Events: Research Unit

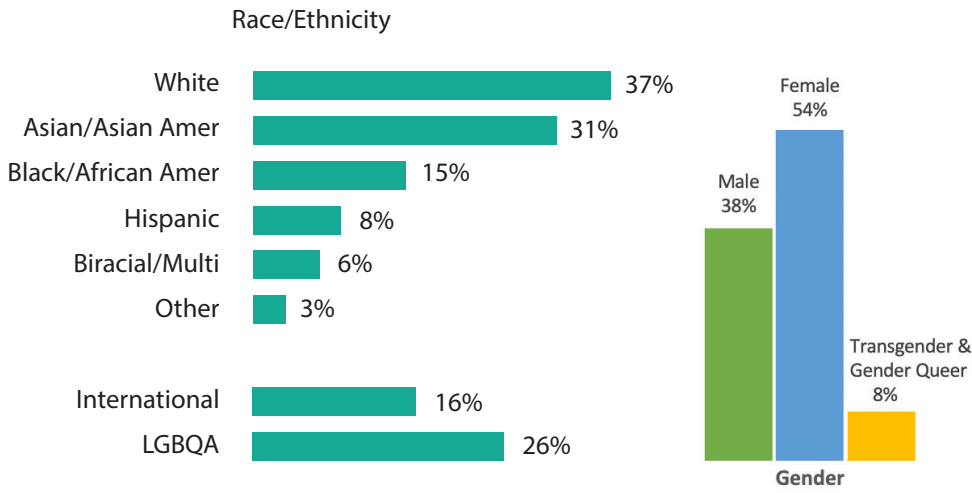
Accomplishments

1. The RU staff continued designing and implementing our biannual University New Student Census (UNSC) and the Withdrawal Survey. Conducting these studies using rigorous research standards is a top priority for our team. These studies helped us understand our incoming students' experiences, aspirations, and expectations, as well as factors associated with student retention, academic success, and well-being.
2. In Spring 2024, we also conducted a follow-up study with the students who completed the 2020 UNSC—this cohort began their enrollment at UMD and participated in remote learning during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to finalizing this survey, we conducted focus group discussions with the Counseling Center Student Advisory Board members to seek their feedback on the survey and suggestions for our study. The data from the follow-up study provide us with great insights into the long-term pandemic impacts on our students' well-being and academic experiences.
3. In this academic year, the RU produced three research reports on students' food/housing security and well-being using the data from the UNSCs, Withdrawal Survey, and 2023 Food Access & Student Well-being Study. These reports highlighted our quantitative and qualitative findings across time. Additionally, we completed 10 research presentations to communicate our research findings and the practical implications to campus stakeholders, professional communities, and the general public. Finally, we have one paper—entitled “College students' coping profiles, resilience, well-being, academic performance, and attitudes toward seeking help during the COVID-19 pandemic”—in press in *The Counseling Psychologist*. This paper examined the data from students who completed the UNSC in 2016 and a follow-up survey during the pandemic lockdown in 2020—this was the first ever UNSC follow-up study since the RU started conducting the census surveys with incoming undergraduate students at UMD in 1958.
4. We successfully renewed the Maryland Hunger-Free Campus Grant in fall 2023 and got selected for the highly competitive 2024-25 Do Good Campus Fund—which was announced in *Maryland Today*. These grants allow us to continue our research efforts to fight campus hunger.
5. As a University Honors Faculty Fellow, Dr. Yu-Wei Wang developed and taught a new course “Campus Well-being: Solving the Health Inequity Puzzle (HNUH288V)” for the Health Matters cluster in Spring '24. Students in her class learned about the theories and research related to well-being and health inequity. They also presented data-driven recommendations for student services and future campus surveys to leaders in the Division of Student Affairs.

Who seeks services?

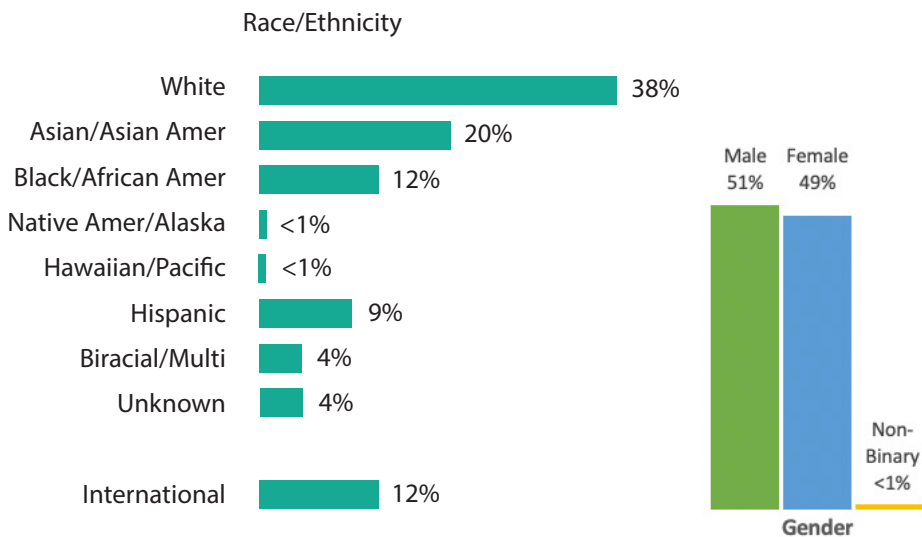
The Counseling Center is committed to providing culturally sensitive services and inclusive programs that facilitate validation and acceptance. Our help-seekers reflect the University’s diverse student population in terms of academic status, race and ethnicity, gender, and country of origin.

Counseling Center Client Demographics



Academic Status	
Graduate Students	20%
First Year	21%
Second Year	19%
Third Year	21%
Fourth Year	15%
Fifth Year	3%
Other	1%

UMD Student Population Demographics



Academic Status	
Graduate Students	25%
First Year	12%
Second Year	17%
Third Year	20%
Fourth Year	22%

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center is the primary campus provider of free and confidential therapy to help UMD students manage mental health, personal, career, and academic challenges. Staffed primarily by licensed professional counselors, psychologists, and social workers, the Counseling Center also conducts campus outreach presentations, provides emergency response services, and assists with referrals to off-campus mental health providers.

2022-2024 Appointments					
	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change	Prior 3-yr Avg.	Change from 3-yr Avg.
All intake assessments	2,145	2,335	9%	2,204	6%
Total client contacts	9,195	9,532	4%	10,372	-8%
Unique clients	2,337	2,233	-4%	2,329	-4%

1. "All intake assessments" counts all attended intakes for the reporting year, including unscheduled appointments such as emergency and drop-in appointments. This number will count an individual each time they had an intake.

2. "Total client contacts" counts all client appointments in the Counseling Center for the reporting year.

3. "Unique clients" counts each student seen at the Counseling Center once regardless of the number or type of appointments.

6

Average number of individual counseling sessions received by clients.

12

Percent of intake clients who received priority assignment to counseling.

89

Percent of clients who were assigned a counselor within 2 weeks of being placed on the waiting list.

602

Number of urgent appointments.

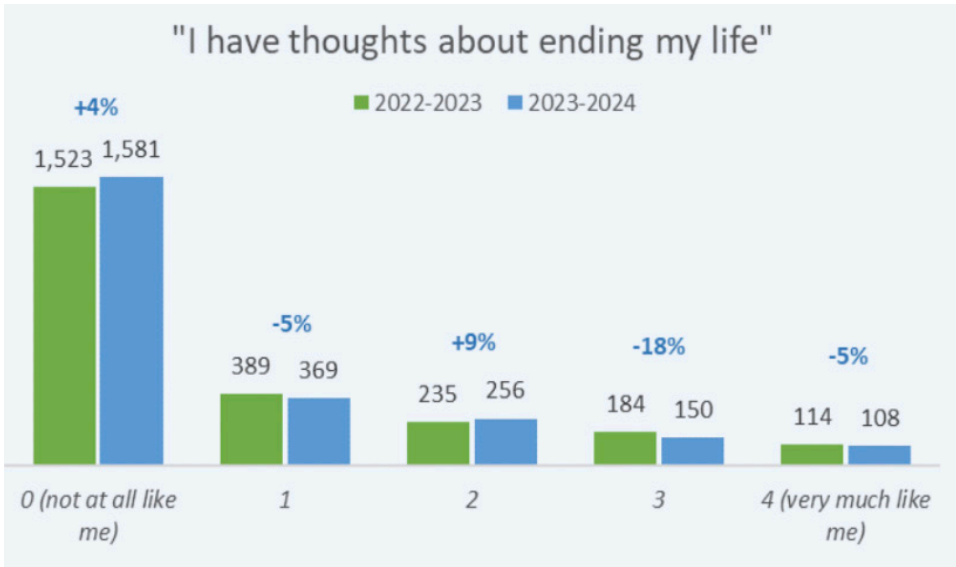
Top Concerns on the Symptom Scale

1. My thoughts are racing
2. I am not able to concentrate as well as usual
3. I feel tense
4. I feel disconnected from myself
5. It's hard to stay motivated for my classes

6. I feel isolated and alone
7. I am concerned other people do not like me
8. I have sleep difficulties
9. I feel self-conscious around others
10. I have unwanted thoughts I can't control

Client Suicide Risk at Intake

At intake, Counseling Center clients completed the several surveys, which include questions regarding current and past suicidality. Clients responding with a 3 or 4 on the CCAPS-62 about having suicidal thoughts are considered higher risk and are further assessed using the Collaborative Assessment and Management of Suicidality (CAMS).

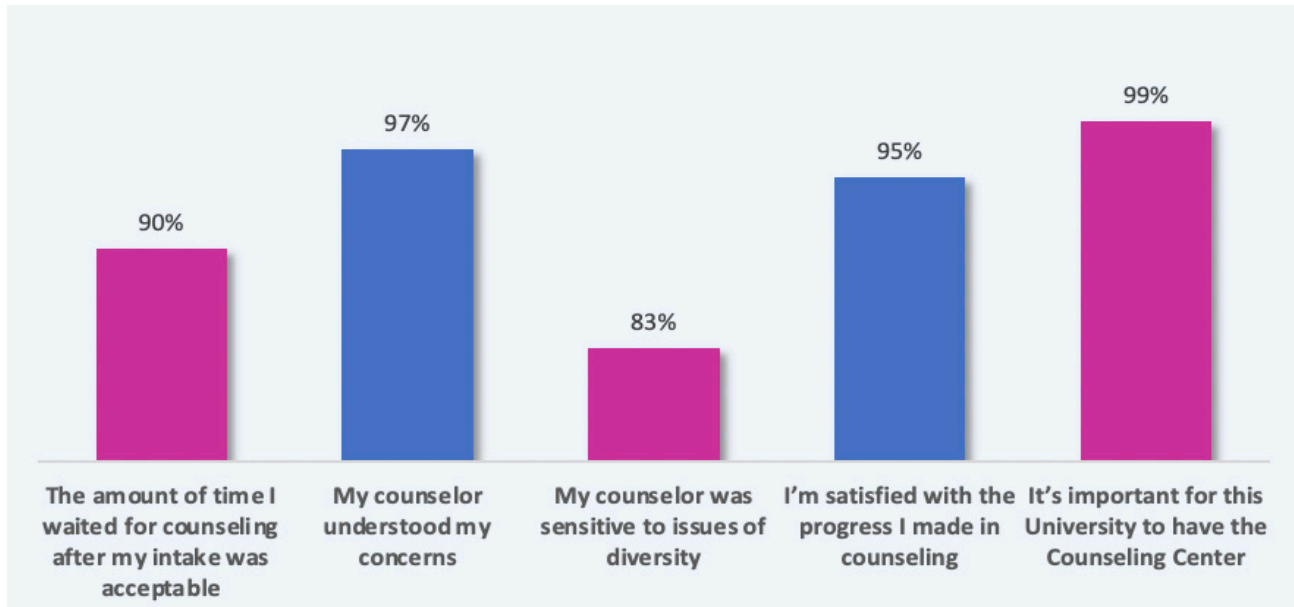


10.5%
of students were considered high-risk.

4.0%
of students considered suicide in the past two weeks.

7.9%
of students have made a suicide attempt in their lifetime.

Student Satisfaction with Counseling

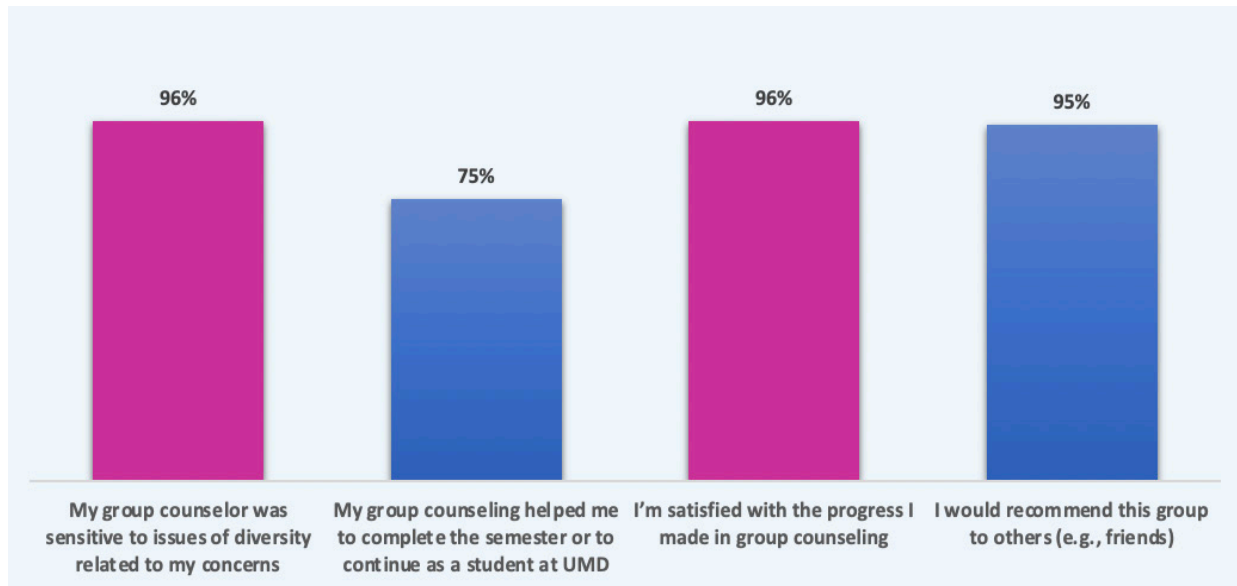


"I felt very heard and understood"

"Was a wonderful counselor; she made sure to ask the questions that would require me to reveal how I truly felt."

"Kind and did not make me feel bad about my actions and emotions"

"Is very personable and genuine...does a great job of maintaining a healthy therapeutic relationship"



Improvement as a Result of Counseling



"Took the time to listen to what I had to say and piece everything together to paint a coherent picture that made sense"

"Has great understanding of cultural identity and great empathy. Although we come from different cultures and upbringing, I always felt understood"

"Very compassionate, empathetic, and asked thought-provoking questions that helped me reflect on myself... grew so much throughout my time."

Group Therapy

Group sessions decreased by 30% over the last academic year.

Following are the Counseling Center’s most attended groups:

- Graduate Student General Therapy Groups
- General Therapy Groups
- APIDA Student Support Group
- Entre Nosotrxs Latinx Support Group
- Memory Circle
- My Body My Self
- LGBTQIA+ Support
- Dissertation Support Group

237
Group and Workshop sessions were conducted

Workshops

The Counseling Center offered two distinct three-session workshops that utilized empirically-supported cognitive-behavioral approaches.

Anxiety Toolbox helped students gain more understanding about anxiety and taught strategies for managing symptoms of anxiety and stress.

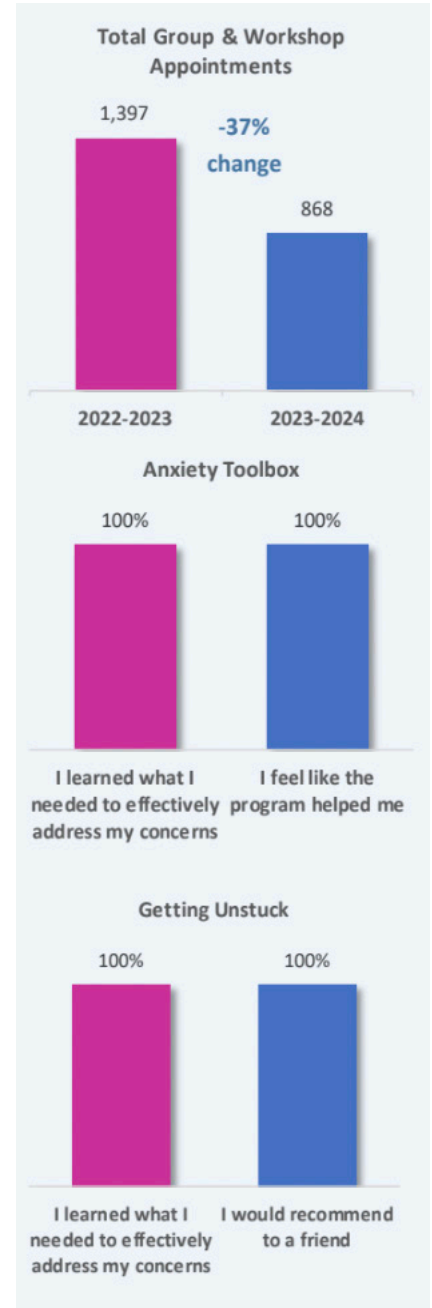
Getting Unstuck helped students understand depression and its symptoms, as well as learn strategies to manage these symptoms.

59
clients participated in Anxiety Toolbox

15
clients participated in Getting Unstuck

96
sessions offered during 2022-2023

38%
decrease in sessions offered

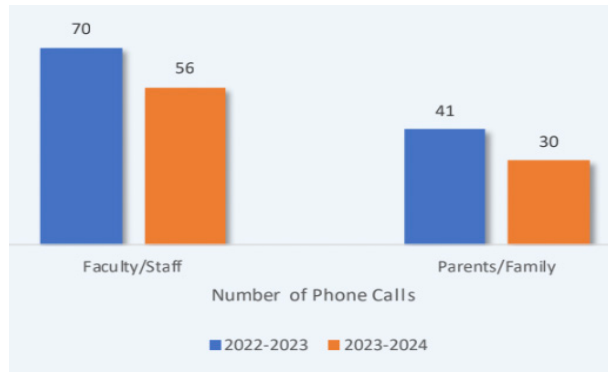


Referral Services

629
Appointments were conducted with 601 clients

37%
confirmed that they had started treatment

Summary of 'Warmline' Phone Consultations with the Counseling Center



Top Caller Concerns	Faculty/Staff	Parents/Family
Clinical	45%	40%
Learning/Academic	36%	—
Psychosocial Stressors	32%	30%
Adjustment	—	30%
Resource Request	—	—
Other	18%	36%

Counseling Center Outreach Highlights

What's New in Outreach

UMD Scale Smash

- The Counseling Center hosted the first UMD Scale Smash, where we guided students from across campus in a series of activities to let go of what's weighing them down, practice self-acceptance, and smashing scales and diet culture.

Meet Your Providers

- As part of Mental Health Awareness Week, the Meet Your Providers event allowed students to connect informally with their mental health providers. Staff from the Counseling Center and other campus health services chatted with students to build relationships, share resources, and create awareness about the services and providers available to them on campus.

Skills for Socializing

- Skills for Socializing is a new topic added to the Wellness Series this year, offering students strategies to make new friends, strengthen connections, and manage social discomfort.

Outreach Traditions

Training to Evaluate, Respond to, and Prevent Suicide (T.E.R.P.S.) for Terps

- We continued the T.E.R.P.S. for Terps program this year by training 300 faculty and staff across campus to learn how to identify mental health concerns in students and respond with empathy and appropriate referrals.

Wellness Series

- With our rebranded Wellness Series, we continued to provide virtual, drop-in skills sessions on 16 different mental health topics every Monday-Thursday throughout the fall and spring semesters, reaching 420 attendees this year.

Faculty/Staff Open House

- The success of our first campus-wide faculty and staff open house led us to bring the event back this year! Faculty and staff from across divisions and departments joined us to learn about our services, connect with one another, and strengthen our commitment to our students.

Outreach by the Numbers

This year we provided 318 unique outreach programs to 11,421 attendees, including:

- Over 100 psychoeducational presentations and programs on a myriad of mental health focused topics to students, faculty, staff, and parents
- 24 crisis response interventions following local and global tragic events that impact the campus community
- Engaging approximately 3,650 students at tabling events during campus-wide orientations and new student activities this year

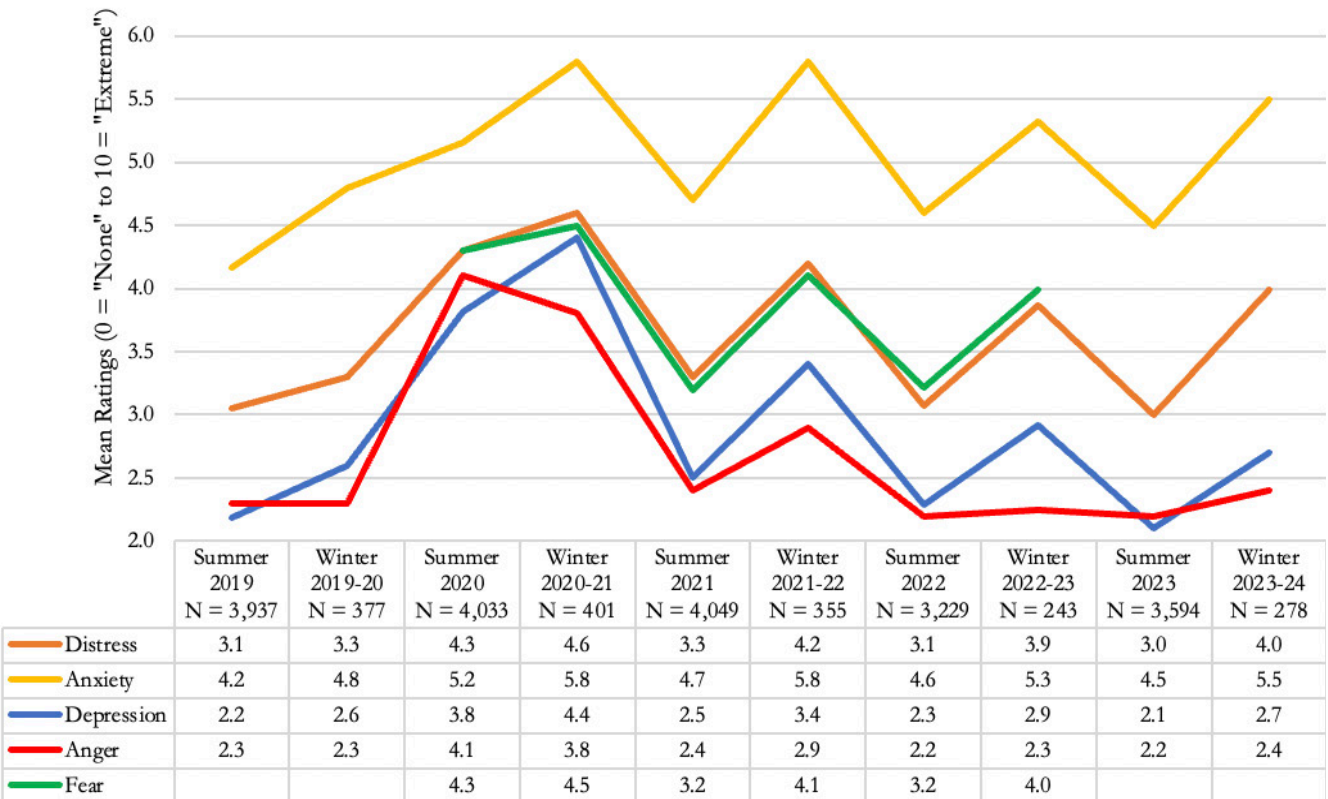
Research Unit

The Research Unit (RU) is responsible for generating new ideas and conducting research studies that support the interests of the Counseling Center, Division of Student Affairs, and the University community. Research topics include student development and basic needs, retention, clinical service delivery, multiculturalism, and social justice, as well as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The RU produces a variety of research briefs, publishes articles in professional journals, and presents study findings at conferences and to the campus community. The design, implementation, and analyses of the bi-annual University New Student Census (UNSC), Withdrawal Survey, and the Food Access & Student Well-Being Study are the RU's primary responsibilities.

The 2019-2023 UNSCs: Pandemic Impacts, Well-being, & Help-seeking Experiences/Barriers

This report includes data from Summer 2019 to Winter 2023-2024 UNSCs (completed by incoming undergraduate students). Overall, Summer UNSC respondents consisted largely of younger and first-time undergraduate students, whereas Winter UNSC respondents mostly consisted of older and transfer students who, on average, came from lower socioeconomic backgrounds than did the Summer cohorts. Incoming students were asked to rate the level of emotional upset they experienced during the week prior to completing the UNSC (see Figure 1). On average, the Winter students reported higher scores than did their Summer peers, except for the Summer 2020 cohort who reported higher scores than did the Winter 2019-20 cohort. It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic began in Spring of 2020.

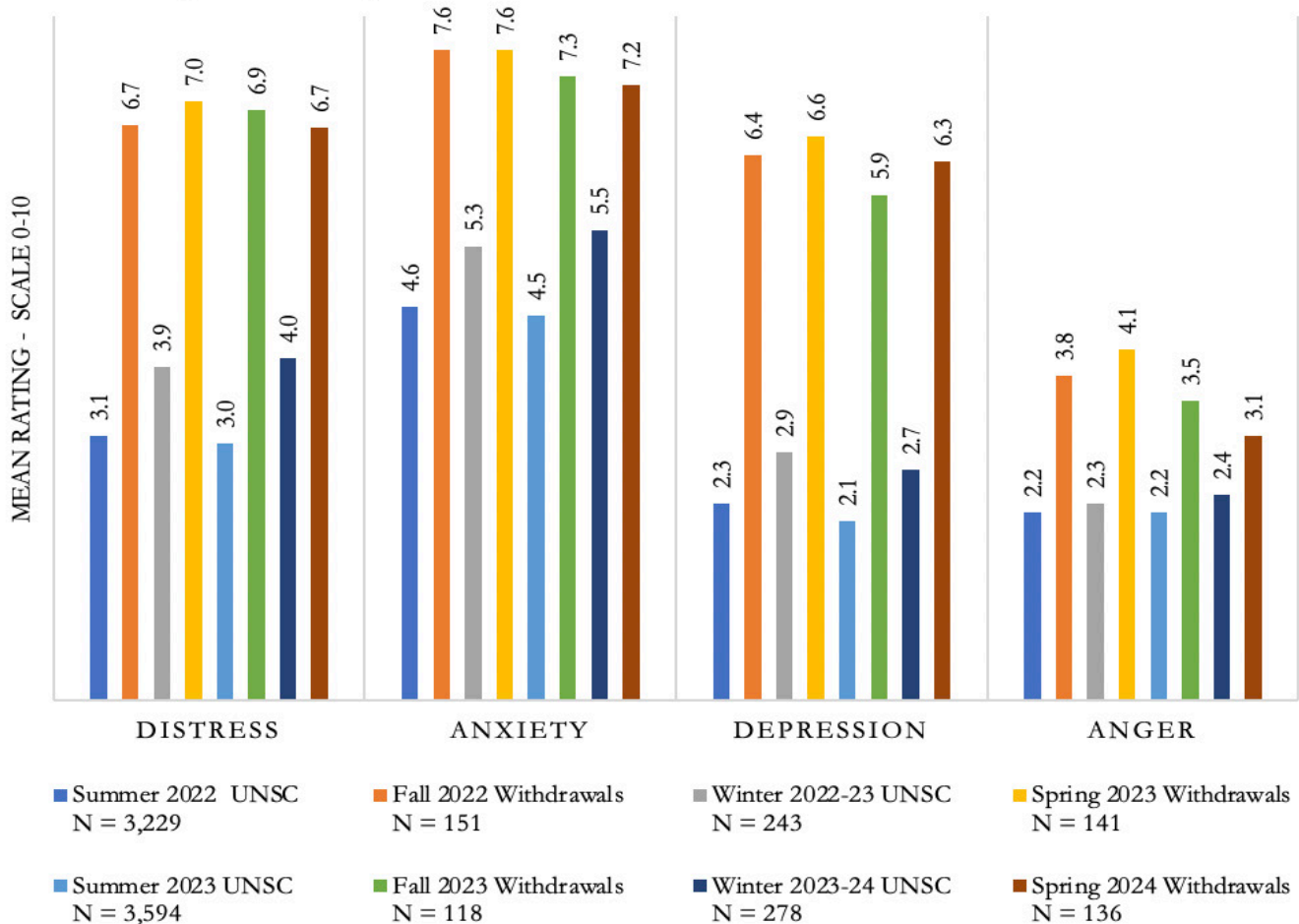
Figure 1
Changes in Students' Well-Being Across Time



The Fall 2022 - Spring 2024 Withdrawal Surveys: Students' Well-Being and Reasons for Withdrawing

The Withdrawal Survey is collected through a partnership between the University of Maryland Counseling Center Research Unit and the Office of the Registrar. During the Fall and Spring semesters, students who leave the University without a degree are invited to complete the Withdrawal Survey at the time of their withdrawal. We asked students to share with us their *primary* reason for withdrawing from the University. Mental health was consistently the most cited reason for students leaving during the semester, with about half (47% - 54%) of the students withdrawing *primarily* due to mental health concerns (e.g., stress, burnout, anxiety, or depression). Withdrawing students, on average, reported higher levels of distress, anxiety, depression, and anger than did the incoming students who completed the UNSCs (see Figure 2).

Figure 2
Well-being Across Samples



The 2020 UNSC Follow-up Study: Help-seeking Experiences/Barriers

In Spring 2024, we conducted a follow-up study with the students who completed the 2020 UNSC as incoming students (N = 218; response rate: 18%). This cohort faced the sudden disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, and many of them had to engage in remote learning as first-year students at UMD. The survey respondents reported a mix of negative and positive impacts from the pandemic: 95% of the students indicated that the pandemic has affected them negatively, while 81% indicated it impacted them positively to some degree. In total, 30% of students indicated that they have sought or received counseling from available mental health services at UMD (e.g., Counseling Center and Behavioral Health Services), whereas 40% reported that they have not sought counseling for reasons other than not needing it. It is important to note that these two groups of students reported similar levels of distress, anxiety, and loneliness. The top three help-seeking barriers that influenced these students' ability or willingness to seek mental health services at UMD are listed below:

- Among those who have sought counseling at UMD: Lack of or limited access to mental health care (e.g., long wait lists; 59%), feeling discouraged because of past unfavorable experiences with mental health services (41%), and lack of time (i.e., due to academic demands, or having too many non-academic/personal time commitments; 41%).
- Among those who have not sought counseling at UMD because of other reasons: lack of time (i.e., 51%), not sure how it works and/or if it will work for them (38%), and lack of motivation (e.g., issues have not been pressing; 34%).

Food Access & Student Well-Being Study: 2023 Survey

In 2017-2018, the RU conducted a large-scale, campus-wide survey to investigate food access among UMD students and its impacts on student well-being and academic success. In this survey that 4,901 students completed in Fall 2017, we learned that approximately 20% of the survey participants experienced food insecurity, and students' well-being and academic experiences were affected by their food access. This campus-wide study helped the University raise funds to build a new Campus Pantry—a resource providing emergency food to the UMD community. Interviews conducted with food insecure students also shed light on the unique challenges they were facing.

More than five years later, we conducted the second campus-wide survey in Spring 2023, which was completed by nearly 6,000 students (response rate = 16%). For this survey, we used funds from the State of Maryland Hunger-Free Campus Grant, the NACAS Foundation Campus Care Grant, and the Counseling Center. The survey assessed the level of food insecurity among the student population at UMD, examined the impacts of food insecurity on student well-being and future career development, and investigated the barriers that prevent students from accessing the new Campus Pantry. The results revealed that 27% of the Spring 2023 survey respondents were food insecure – a marked increase from Fall 2017. Consistent with the 2017 findings, food insecure students reported more psychological symptoms (e.g., distress, anxiety, depression, and anger), greater loneliness, poorer evaluation of own health, and greater perceived career constraints (e.g., feeling like they need to take unenjoyable jobs in order to make ends meet or provide for their families) than did their counterparts.

While 25% of food insecure students reported using the UMD Campus Pantry (the old and/or the new one that opened in August 2021 in South Campus Dining), awareness and utilization of the Pantry were found to be relatively low. Only less than half of the food insecure students were aware of the new Pantry and that having a UMD ID makes them eligible to access it (42% and 48%, respectively). Furthermore, several barriers were identified that prevented students from accessing the Pantry at time of need, including hours and location of the Pantry, concerns about taking food away from others who may be even worse off, lack of knowledge about how the Pantry works, concerns about confidentiality of Pantry access data, and internalized stigma related to seeking food assistance at the Pantry.

Scholarly Activities

The Research Committee

The research committee conducted two research projects this year: one focused on clients' academic distress and the other one focused on clients' career concerns. The first project examined the level of congruency between a clinician's endorsement on the Clinician Index of Client Concerns (CLICC) and a client's endorsement on CCAPS 62 in terms of academic distress. The logistic regression analysis was utilized, and the result indicates the model is statistically significant, $\chi^2(6) = 440.093$, $p < .001$. Overall, the results suggest that when selecting client concerns, clinicians' choice of academic performance is associated with students' ratings on the academic distress subscale of the CCAPS as well as student's race and first-generation status. While our model is significant and has acceptable accuracy, the model's sensitivity is lower than desired. It is also surprising to note that financial stress, international student status, and students' endorsement of considering leaving the university did not significantly increase the likelihood of clinicians' selection of academic performance as a concern on the CLICC.

The second project examined whether the Career Concern Questionnaire is a valid measure for our clinical population. Using the data collected by the Counseling Center during the 2021-2022 academic year, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to determine if the 16-items in the Career Concerns Questionnaire aligned with the four subscales identified in the Standardized Data Set (SDS) and if all the items should be retained in the measure. Preliminary results indicated that a three-subscale structure was more appropriate for the items in the Career Concerns Questionnaire. Additionally, three questions were removed to improve the statistical fit of the Career Concerns Questionnaire to the three-subscale structure. To confirm the three-subscale structure of the Career Concerns Questionnaire, data collected by the Counseling Center during the 2022-2023 academic year were used for a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and a bifactor model analysis. Preliminary results indicated that the 13-item, three-subscale structure was a good fit for the Career Concerns Questionnaire data. Additionally, the bifactor model analysis indicated that the measure is unidimensional, suggesting that the three subscales collectively measure career concerns as a single construct.

Publications and Presentations by Counseling Center Staff

7

articles and reports
published and/or
in press

14

presentations
at professional
conferences and
meetings

Training Programs

Training is a key component of the mission of the Counseling Center. Several training programs in the Counseling Center offer supervised training to psychology graduate students who are preparing for careers as psychologists, teachers, and researchers.

4
No. of Doctoral
Interns

1
No. of Doctoral
Externs

21
No. of Practicum
Trainees

Doctoral Psychology Internship

The Counseling Center's doctoral psychology internship, accredited by the American Psychological Association, provides training in the professional activities of university-based psychologists. The Counseling Center trains four interns who complete a 2,000-hour program that runs each academic year from July 1 to June 30. Based in the Counseling Center the internship provides generalist training in individual counseling, group counseling, consultation and outreach, research, and supervision.

Summary of Internship Applicants

Application Year	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
% International Student	7%	11%	13%	14%	11%
Degree – PhD	76%	62%	69%	76%	71%
Degree – PsyD	24%	38%	31%	24%	29%
Degree – Counseling Psychology	59%	49%	54%	52%	55%
Degree – Clinical Psychology	39%	46%	44%	45%	41%
Degree – Combined	2%	5%	2%	3%	4%

Psychology Externship

The part-time psychology externship provides counseling training to one or two advanced psychology graduate students. Externs carry a weekly client caseload of six to eight students and receive two hours per week of individual clinical supervision from a senior Counseling Center therapist. Externs also attend weekly senior staff case conference. Optional training experiences include co-leading therapy groups and co-presenting outreach programs.

Practicum Trainees

The Counseling Center is the primary clinical training site for doctoral students in the UMD Counseling Psychology program and master's students in Counseling, Higher Education and Special Education. Practicum students carry a weekly client caseload of one to four students and receive one hour per week of individual clinical supervision from either doctoral interns or senior Counseling Center therapists.

Staff

The Counseling Center has two divisions: Counseling Center and Research Unit. Day-to-day operations are managed by the Administrative Group.

Counseling Center Leadership

Chetan Joshi, PhD
Director

Maria Berbery, PhD
Training Director,
Counseling Center

Yi-Jiun Lin, PhD
Assistant Director,
Counseling Center

Theodore Pickett, Jr., PhD
Associate Director,
Counseling Center

Yu-Wei Wang, PhD
Research Director,
Assistant Director, &
Clinical Associate Professor

Jeremy Lightner, MS
Office Manager

Shannon Quarles
Assistant to the Director

Kristin Townes, MA
Business Manager

Mira An, MA
Graduate Assistant

Shereen Ashai, MA
Graduate Assistant

Non-Exempt Staff

Donna Crooks
Margaret Gibbs
Yolonda Lawrence

Counseling Center Clinicians

Alex Agiliga, PhD
Allison Asarch, PsyD
Shealyn Blanchard, PhD
AnTanique Buckley, LCSW-C
Nehal El Guindy, LCPC
Christina Escobar, LCSW-C
Michelle Farrell, PhD
Kara Frome, LCSW-C
Kassandra Getfield, LCPC
Christopher Harlen, LCSW-C
Jihee Hong, PhD
Amy Johnson, LCSW-C
Kristin Lilly, LCSW-C
Monique McIntyre, LCSW-C
Grace-Ellen Mahoney, PhD
Asia Malik, LCPC
Rubi Mancilla, LCPC
Erica Merson, PhD
Urvi Paralkar, PhD
David Petersen, PhD
Pepper Phillips, PhD
CJ Polihronakis, PhD
Meghan Rock, LCPC
Chandni Shah, PhD

Doctoral Interns

Stephanie Burrows, MA
Lex Pulice-Farrow, MA
Seoyeong Lim MA, MEd
NaYeon Yang, MEd

Doctoral Extern

Mira An, MA

Research Unit

Israel Abebe, PhD
Christine Yu, PhD

Research Unit Graduate Assistant

Nathan Quimpo, BA

Research Interns

Annabel Li, MA
Siddhesh Mishra, MS

Research Assistant

Carl Wachowski, BS

Undergraduate Research Assistants

Reima Mannan
Michael Monahan
Ketki Shah

2022-2023 Departures:

Aashna Aggarwal, MEd
Priya Bansal, MA
Tiana Cruz, MA
Chloe Goldbach, MA
Alexandra Huss, LCSW-C
Kevin McGann, PhD (PT)
Bhanu Priya Moturu, MEd
Iman Said, BS
Devon Washington, MS



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