Why Campus Health Is Indispensable to the Academic Mission – Making the Case

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Workshop Goals

- Improve our understanding of how health promotion work “fits” within our campus’ strategic plan
- Build our capacity to communicate this “fit” to campus constituents
- Enhance our ability to cultivate ownership/buy-in among health professionals for this “fit”
- Increase our knowledge and skills to more effectively lead efforts to embed student health & wellness in the academic mission
Unlearning What We Have Learned Before We Can Learn More

"It seems to me, that this, too, is how memory works. What we remember of what was done to us shapes our view, molds us, sets our stance. But what we remember is past, it no longer exists, and yet we hold on to it, live by it, surrender so much control to it. What do we become when we put down the scripts written by history and memory, when each person before us can be seen free of the cultural or personal narrative we've inherited or devised? When we, ourselves, can taste that freedom."


Part I: Increasing Knowledge
Discussion Question

What are the top 3-5 things that your Dean, Vice President or President worries about on a regular basis?

Challenges & Opportunities Facing US Institutions of Higher Education

- Declining public investment
- Growing view of higher education as a private good
- Increasing accountability to parents, governing boards & legislatures
- Leadership “vacuums” due to wave of retirements & reorganizations
- Inability to fully prepare students for global workforce demands
- Declining high school graduation rates & economic recession
- Expanding diversity of student population
- Proliferation of educational technology
- Expanding public policy involvement/interference at federal level
Considerations for State Colleges & Universities in Post-Recession US (AASCU, 2009)

- **Drive a student- and learning-centric change agenda**
  - Build campus culture predisposed to implementing improvement, not biased by past decision-making practices
  - Understand core activity of teaching and core product of learning

- **Mission fulfillment through public purpose**
  - Partner with private, non-profit, philanthropic and local governmental entities for community good
  - Conduct applied research and provide technical expertise to solve problems/challenges
  - Coordinate service learning to benefit the community, e.g., “stewards of place”

- **Strategic prioritization and reallocation**
  - Focus on essential programs and institutional strengths
  - Protect core academic enterprise; enhance revenue drivers
  - Make cuts with a “scalpel – not a machete”

- **Promote public accountability and societal value**
  - Be proactive in demonstrating transparency, e.g., [www.collegeportraits.org](http://www.collegeportraits.org)
  - Catalog/communicate successes/contributions/efficiencies
  - Convey value of public higher education to funders

**Major Research Findings About Student Success**

- National Survey of Student Engagement – student persistence (Kuh, et al.)

- First-year experience – curricular & co-curricular interventions

- Access for low-income & first-generation students (Lumina Foundation, Pell Institute)

- How college affects students (Pascarella & Terenzini; Astin; Kuh, et al.; Institute for Higher Education Policy)

- Benefits of a liberal education (AAC&U)
National Survey of Student Engagement

- The time and energy students devote to educationally purposeful activities is the single best predictor of their learning and personal development (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Pace, 1980; Tinto, 1993).
  - Level of academic challenge
  - Active & collaborative learning
  - Student-faculty interactions
  - Enriching educational experiences
  - Supportive campus environment

- Campuses can help students achieve at higher-than-predicted rates by creating “conditions that matter” (Kuh, et al., 2005)

URL: http://nsse.iub.edu/

First-Year Experience

- Initiatives with some documented positive impact:
  - First-year seminars
  - Summer reading programs
  - Capstone courses
  - Learning communities
  - Service learning initiatives
  - Peer education programs for diversity, orientation & supplemental instruction

URL: http://sc.edu/fye/
Access & Achievement for Underserved Student Populations

- Low-income, first-generation students were nearly four times more likely – 26% to 7% - to leave higher education after the first year than students who had neither of these risk factors.

- After six years, only 11% of low-income, first-generation students had earned bachelor's degrees compared to 55% of their more advantaged peers.
  - In public four-year institutions, only 34% of low-income, first-generation students earned bachelor's degrees in 6 years compared to 68% of their peers.
  - In private, not-for-profit four-year institutions, only 43% of low-income, first-generation students compared to 80% of their peers did so.

Source: Pell Institute, Moving Beyond Access: College Success for Low-Income, First-Generation Students (2009)

Institutions Who Did Well Serving Underserved Students:

- Were highly residential & had moderately selective admissions
- Designated faculty/staff as accessible “first responders”
- Promoted high levels of student engagement & involvement
- Focused on the first-year experience; improved instruction in introductory courses
- Monitored student progress & intervened assertively
- Supported student success with ample academic & social support services
- Provided structured, intensive support for at-risk students
- Had strong leadership & institutional commitment to student success
- Fostered coordination & collaboration, and many emphasized data & evaluation

Source: Pell Institute, Demography Is Not Destiny: Increasing the Graduation Rates of Low-Income College Students at Large Public Universities (2009)
How College Benefits Students & Communities

- Those with a college degree are one-half as likely to be unemployed compared to those with a high school diploma (9.4% compared to 4.7%) (AASCU, 2009)

- US average income with 4-year degree is $43,000/year versus $27,000/year with just HS diploma (Lumina Foundation, 2009)

- Today's four-year college graduates will earn nearly $1 million more over their working lives than will those who only receive a high school diploma and nearly $500,000 more than those who attend some college and/or earn a two-year degree (College Board, 2007). This translates into tax revenue.

- Countless psychological, cognitive and other benefits are associated with even just one year of college-attendance (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), including decreased crime and poverty rates and improved health (Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2005)

Benefits of A Liberal Education

- “Liberal Education is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g., science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings” (AAC&U)

- URL: http://www.aacu.org/leap/what_is_liberal_education.cfm
Liberal Education (continued) – Essential Learning Outcomes

- Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World
  - Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts
  - Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring

- Intellectual and Practical Skills
  - Including inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork and problem solving
  - Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

- Personal and Social Responsibility
  - Including civic knowledge and engagement—local and global, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, foundations and skills for lifelong learning
  - Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges

- Integrative and Applied Learning
  - Including synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized studies
  - Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

Mission of Campus Health Promotion

- “To advance the health of students and to contribute to the creation of healthy and socially just campus communities”

Therefore, health promotion professionals strive to:

- Reduce risk for individual illness and injury
- Enhance health as a strategy to support student learning
- Advocate for safety, social justice, economic opportunity and human dignity
- Identify and address the complex social, cultural, economic and political factors that may contribute to or compromise the health of individuals or communities
- Advocate for inclusive and equal access to resources and services
- Eliminate health disparities and increase the quality and years of healthy life for all

Source: American College Health Association (2005), Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education
Mission of Campus Health Promotion (continued)

- The scope of practice of health promotion on college campuses includes both individual and environmental approaches. Thus, health promotion professionals:
  - Build individual capacity.
  - Address larger institutional issues, community factors, and public policies that affect the health of students.

- Health promotion and the academic mission of higher education are natural allies. Health promotion professionals in colleges and universities:
  - Support the academic mission of student learning by assisting students in leading healthier lives.
  - Engage individuals who will become political, social and economic decision makers, thereby advancing the collective health of the community.

Source: American College Health Association (2005), Standards of Practice for Health Promotion in Higher Education

Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs Professionals

- Engage students in active learning
- Help students develop coherent values & ethical standards
- Set & communicate high expectations for learning
- Use systematic inquiry to improve student & institutional performance
- Use resources effectively to achieve institutional mission & goals
- Forge educational partnerships to advance student learning
- Build supportive & inclusive communities

Part II: Shifting Our Paradigm

Discussion Question

- With regard to the top 3-5 things that your Dean, Vice President or President worries about on a regular basis, what are you doing to help him/her resolve those concerns/challenges?
Emerging Role for Student Affairs Educators

- Lead campuses in understanding and responding to changing student populations, new learning styles and different student needs
- Create and implement systems, structures and processes that provide a focus, or center, for learning
- Foster inclusive, supportive and respectful living-learning-working environments
- Serve as “learning managers” to facilitate relationships among individual students, student living groups, and student organizations, as well as between students and faculty, administrators or other staff


What is Health?

- Not primarily/exclusively biomedical, clinical, individual or illness-based
- Embraces broader qualities/states of wellness, social justice and human dignity
- Creates and enhances capacity (e.g., for interpersonal engagement, academic performance, personal development, etc.)
- Has implications at the population/community level: “our common health”

## The Spectrum of Prevention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influencing Policy &amp; Legislation</td>
<td>1. Developing strategies to change laws &amp; policies to influence outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing Organizational Practices</td>
<td>2. Adopting regulations &amp; shaping norms to improve health &amp; safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fostering Coalitions &amp; Networks</td>
<td>3. Convoking groups &amp; individuals for broader goals &amp; greater impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educating Providers</td>
<td>4. Informing providers who will transmit skills &amp; knowledge to others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting Community Education</td>
<td>5. Reaching groups of people with information &amp; resources to promote health &amp; safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthening Individual Knowledge &amp; Skills</td>
<td>6. Enhancing an individual's capability of preventing injury or illness &amp; promoting safety</td>
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## So Now What?

- **Redefine** health not as an ends unto itself but as a means to an end, i.e., health is instrumental to the goals of student affairs and of higher education
- **Reframe** health as a tool for explaining and resolving important aspects of students’ academic engagement and achievement
- **Reconnect** student learning with student development
- **Relocate** the locus of health and health promotion outside of the student health service unit or facility
- **Redesign** our work from so that an ecological model prevails, rather than a medical one
- **Reconceptualize** health as an inspirational opportunity for collegial discourse, new partnerships with students, collaborative projects and cross-campus coalitions
How Health & Higher Learning Are Interdependent

“...as long as we believe that education has something to do with helping individuals achieve their maximum potential for self-development, the development of connection to others, and effective contribution to a lively democracy and its institutions, we cannot achieve the mission of higher education without dealing in some way with health. If we believe we can, we do so at the risk of ignoring major personal, environmental, and political dimensions of education.”


How Health & Higher Learning Are Interdependent (continued)

- An academic focus on health issues, as complex, multi-dimensional public problems of great consequence, has the capacity to improve undergraduate education.

- The assets of a good undergraduate education, properly directed, have the capacity to promote health and prevent disease.

Linking Health Promotion With The Academic Mission - Examples

- Student engagement – involvement in peer education as educationally enriching activity; health promotion center as a place of support & student community
- First-year experience – offer capstone course or freshman seminar with health promotion or social justice as unifying theme
- Liberal learning – sociopolitical analysis of HIV/AIDS epidemic in the world to promote critical thinking
- Service learning – involve students in resolution of actual campus or community-based health challenges, e.g., violence
- Applied learning – student representation on policy development committees for the campus or local community, e.g., alcohol and other drug abuse
- Student retention – compare/contrast retention rates of students by health indicators and health-related behaviors

Infusing the “Language” & “Culture” of Learning in Health

- Vision & mission statement – focus on student learning
- Institutional and/or organizational placement – form & nomenclature reflects actual function
- Strategic planning – alignment with academic priorities
- Assessment & evaluation – impact versus input
- Annual reports – learning outcomes versus service utilization
- Academic & student affairs partnerships – bridges instead of silos
- Campus & community coalitions – resource for capacity building versus expert consultant
Engendering Support & Buy-In from Other Health Professionals

- “Walk the talk” and “talk the talk” – even when you don’t think you are being seen or heard
- Leave your comfort zone, ask questions & seek feedback – and be ready for what you will hear!
- Be a “broken record” and leverage every possible chance to “tell your story”
- Co-opt every possible critic and make him/her your ally
- Develop & sustain genuine networks that cross boundary lines in every direction and on every level
- “Put wheels under” your work by documenting and/or demonstrating the positive outcomes
- Students and faculty will be your natural constituents

To download a copy of this presentation & supporting materials, please visit http://www.hilo.hawaii.edu/vcsa

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