

The University of Texas at Dallas

2006

Annual Report
Student Counseling
Center

FY 06
Year in Review

Executive Summary

UTD Student Counseling Center

More than 3500 counseling appointments, consultations, and psychiatric sessions were provided to assist students in improving the emotional health needed to have a positive university experience. To assist skill building for college success, more than 1600 students, faculty and staff were provided classroom presentations, workshops, and outreach presentations.

A dramatic increase in crisis intervention sessions (116% increase) were provided to students experiencing psychological emergencies. Numerous students were hospitalized for psychiatric treatment. Students were treated for severe psychological distress especially depression, panic attacks, and psychosis. In addition, crisis intervention was provided to Katrina survivors, students impacted by the death of student, and staff impacted by the death of a colleague.

Compared to the prior year, there was an 11% increase in the number of students receiving individual and couples counseling at the Center. There was a 22% increase in the number of counseling sessions provided.

There was a 55% increase in the number of students receiving psychiatric services and an 88% increase in the number of psychiatric evaluations and follow up appointments.

Due to increasing demands for Counseling Center services, a brief therapy model was implemented. For a minority of troubled clients who required additional mental health treatment, group therapy and referrals to the community were provided.

Major Accomplishments

- Provided members of the UTD community with more than 4000 counseling sessions, psychiatric sessions, workshops, outreach presentations, classroom presentations, consultations, mandatory assessments, and information and awareness programs.
- 173 crisis intervention sessions were provided to students experiencing psychological emergencies. This represents a 116% increase over the previous year. 10 students were hospitalized for psychiatric treatment.
- Provided campus crisis intervention to Katrina survivors, students impacted by the death of student, and staff impacted by the death of colleague.
- Implemented a risk assessment plan, invited speakers and provided staff education on crisis intervention and assessment and legal and ethical issues.
- Implementation of a successful practicum program which allowed for 89 additional student clients treated in 368 counseling sessions.
- Installation of a “panic button” system to create greater security and safety for staff when working with aggressive and potentially dangerous clients.
- Working to better meet the needs of UTD’s international student population, a focus group was created which led to greater Counseling Center involvement with international student orientation and the planning for a cooperative group program.
- Enhanced workshop presentations by creating PowerPoint programs.
- Updated the self-help library.
- Expanded Safe Zone programming in order to help create a safe space for people of all races, ethnicities, nationalities, genders, sexual orientations, religions, ages, and abilities.
- Participation as a part of a panel of speakers in the new Parent Transition seminars which were added to Orientation.
- Revised intake system to better meet student needs and serve more students in a timely manner.
- James Cannici, Ph.D. was elected as president of the Texas University and College Counseling Center Directors Association. Jen Hartman, Ph.D. was elected as president of the Dallas Psychological Association.

Counseling Center Staff

Staff:

James Cannici, Ph.D.	Director, Psychologist
Sharon Bowles, LCSW	Counseling Specialist III
Jennifer Hartman, Ph.D.	Psychologist IV (1/2 time)
Lisa Wechsler, Ph.D. (Sept-May)	Psychologist IV (1/2 time)
Ellie Hakim, Ph.D.	Psychologist IV
Heather Weiner, M.A. (Sept-Feb)	Post-Doctoral Fellow
Smitha Bhat, PsyD (March-Aug)	Psychologist IV

Support Staff:

Adriene Blaskey, A.A.	Secretary III
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Interns:

Jessica Forshee, M.A.	University of Arkansas
Jeanette Reinoso, M.Ed.	University of Arizona

Annual Report of Services

Direct Service

The Counseling Center provides a wide variety of services. These include counseling (individuals, couples, families and groups), consultations about students (to faculty, staff, parents and students), assessments, psychiatric treatment, workshops, classroom and other presentations, and awareness programs. The number of individuals receiving services and the number of sessions provided during the year are listed below.

Individuals:

Counseling	514
Psychiatric treatment.....	87
Consultations.....	190
Workshops	148
Tested.....	54
Awareness and Info programs	1720
Classroom presentations	1111
Outreach presentations.....	410

Sessions:

Counseling	2855
Psychiatric.....	443
Workshops	16
Classroom Presentations	14
Outreach Presentations.....	12
Awareness and Info Programs	36

Other:

Group Appointments...(20 individuals/29 sessions)	92
Books/Tapes (checked out).....	106
Psychological Tests Given.....	81

How students found out about us

The Counseling Center collected data on how counseling clients find out about the Counseling Center services, which allows the center to evaluate our methods of marketing services and programs. When students register at the Center, they are asked how they found out about Counseling Center Services. The results indicate a wide variety of ways that students find out about counseling center services. Their responses are as follows:

Method	%
UTD Website	22
Friends	18
Signs/Brochures/Ads	16
Staff/Faculty	14
Orientation	9
Other	8
Rhetoric 1101	7
Health Center	3
Catalogue	.5
Dean of Students	.5
Disability Services	.5
Women's Center	.5
Peer Advisors	.5
International Student Services	.5

Who referred counseling clients to us

The Counseling Center collected data on how clients were referred to the Counseling Center. The results indicate that most students seek out counseling on their own, however, a significant number are referred to the Counseling Center by faculty/staff and friends. Their responses are as follows:

Referral Source	%
Self	57
Faculty/Staff	16
Friends	15
Family	5
Other	4
Health Center	3

Web Page Student Counseling Center

The Counseling Center promotes services in a variety of ways. One increasingly popular method of providing information about programs and services is through our web site. One resource provided to students is the Self-Help section which contains information for students on a wide variety of mental health topics. In addition, there are resources for staff and faculty on working with troubled students. Each year additional information and resources are added.

This year, there were about 5800 visits to the Counseling Center home page. The most popular pages within the Counseling Center website were as follows:

- Self-Help-Overcoming Pornography Addiction (10,364 visits)
- Self-Help-Computer Addiction (4055 visits)
- Self-Help-Overcoming Procrastination (3507 visits)
- Self-Help Social Anxiety (3266 visits)

Due to information presented on our website, the Dallas Morning News and a local TV station arranged interviews with Counseling Center staff on computer and pornography addiction.

Information about Counseling Clients

The Counseling Center staff saw students with a wide variety of problems. The most frequently listed problems at intake included the following: (1) concentration, (2) academic-related difficulties, and (3) depression. The wide range of problems students report are listed below.

Difficulty	%
Concentration	73
Academics/schoolwork/grades	63
Depression	58
Sleeping problems	50
Procrastination/getting motivated	45
Decisions about career/major	45
Anxiety/fear/worries/nervousness	43
Loneliness	40
Uncertainty about future/life after college	38
Self-esteem/self-confidence	35
Relationship with family/parents/siblings	35
Relationship with romantic partner/spouse	30
Unwanted thoughts	30
Time management	30
Test/speech/performance anxiety	30
Finances	28
Perfectionism	28
Breakup/loss of a relationship	23
Irritability, anger, hostility	20
Developing independence from one's family	20
Making friends	18
Confusion about beliefs/values	18
Assertiveness	18
Body image	15
Shyness, being ill at ease with people	15
Dating concerns	13
Weight problems	13
Eating problems (fasting/avoiding food)	13
Relationship with friends/roommates/peers	10
Physical health problem	10
Suicidal feelings/thoughts	10
Religious/spiritual concerns	10
Sexual concerns	8
Hurting self	8
Internet heavy use/abuse	8
Adjustment to college	5
Death/impending death of significant person	5
Racial discrimination	5
Rape/sexual assault	3
Sexual identification	3
Homesickness	3
Alcohol/drugs	3

Counseling Client Characteristics

While many of the demographic characteristics of Counseling Center clients were typical of the UTD student population, there were some exceptions. Compared to their presence in the general student population, more women, Waterview residents and undergraduates sought counseling. Client Characteristics were as follows:

<u>Sex</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>	<u>%</u>
Female	55	Single	79
Male	45	Married	15
		Divorced	2
		Separated	1
		Living Together	3
<u>Age</u>		<u>Living Situation</u>	
17	1	Roommate(s)	39
18-21	39	Spouse/Partner	17
22-29	42	Alone	17
30-39	13	Parents	22
40-49	4	Children	1
50-beyond	1	Other	4
<u>Class</u>		<u>Residence</u>	
Freshman	19	Waterview Apts.	68
Sophomore	12	Off-Campus (commuter)	32
Junior	22		
Senior	24	<u>Schools</u>	
Grad. Student	19	Natural Science/Math	20
Other	4	Computer Science & EE	17
<u>Ethnicity</u>		Arts/Humanities	16
White	63	Social Sciences	15
Black	6	Human Development	10
Asian/Pacific	18	Management	13
Hispanic	8	General Studies	9
Native Amer.	1		
Other	4		
International	14		

Counseling Services

The Counseling Center provides confidential professional counseling services for a wide range of issues that may interfere with a student's academic progress. Therapy is provided to assist students in improving the emotional health needed to have a positive university experience. Help is available for personal, social or academic concerns.

Counseling offers an opportunity to clarify decisions or explore problems. Some of the issues that bring students to the center are feeling stressed, depressed or anxious. Other common concerns are conflicts in relationships, substance abuse, or planning for the future. In addition, there is a sizable number of students who present with severe psychological problems, including major depression, bipolar disorder, eating disorders and post traumatic stress disorder.

Individual and relationship counseling is provided to students and their partners or families. The focus is on resolving conflicts and improving interpersonal skills and abilities. Group Counseling is provided on both general and specific counseling issues.

Due to increasing demands for Counseling Center services, a brief therapy model was implemented. The arrangement was designed to allow for the treatment of a greater number of students. For a minority of troubled clients who required additional mental health treatment, expanded group counseling services, as well as, referrals to the community were provided.

During the year, 514 students received individual or relationship counseling. These students were seen for a total of 2855 counseling sessions. The average number of sessions was 5.5.

Compared to the prior year, there was an 11% increase in the number of students receiving counseling. There was a 22% increase in the number of counseling sessions.

Group counseling services served additional students. There were 20 individuals participating in 29 group counseling sessions for a total of 92 group appointments. This represents a 52% decline from the previous two years. It is believed that the level of interest in group counseling declined with the elimination of session limits which had been in place the previous two years.

Crisis Services

Throughout the year, crisis intervention services are provided for psychological emergencies. After hours there is a psychologist and a back up clinician on duty available at police discretion. After hour coverage insures that students in a crisis will have access to crisis intervention services.

During offices hours, clinicians also provide walk-in services for students in crisis throughout the year. In addition, clinicians respond to crises when called upon by staff, faculty, the campus police, residential life and the Dean of Students. On a more global scale, the Counseling Center responds actively to issues that may affect students' well-being such as community tragedy, a suicide on campus or an incident in the residence halls.

One hundred seventy three crisis sessions were provided, including contacts with suicidal clients. Many required after hours consultations and some required psychiatric hospitalization. Twenty-eight additional crisis management hours were also needed to do follow up on these crisis clients.

Compared to the prior year, there was a 116% increase in the number of students receiving crisis sessions.

Consultations

Consultations are discussions or meetings with staff, faculty, family, community members or students about students. The discussion may involve clinical or case management issues related to the mental health or wellness of a UTD student or someone in the student's life.

Examples include: talking to a student about how to encourage a roommate to obtain counseling; talking to a student about how to obtain mental health assistance for a family member; a discussion with faculty, staff, students about how to handle a student problem; or discussions with student leaders about what can be done to be of help to a student.

Consultations to the community include discussions with members of a student's support system on clinical issues related to the student client. This may include family members, clergy, or mental health providers. Consultations also include discussions with community providers about sources of adjunctive support services.

During the year, Counseling Center staff had contact with 190 individuals for consultation.

Mandated Assessments

Assessments are provided to students who have been referred for services by the Dean of Students office or Residential Life. These students have come to the attention of school authorities because of problematic conduct. Typical presenting problems include alcohol or drug violations, aggressive behavior or sexual misconduct.

An assessment by the Counseling Center usually involves two to three sessions, including psychological testing. Following the evaluation, the student is provided with feedback about the assessment results. In addition, the student is given recommendations that may be of assistance in a more successful adaptation to college life.

Upon completion of the evaluation and feedback session, the referring office is notified. The only information the Counseling Center provides to the Dean of Students or Residential Life is whether the student completed the mandatory assessment and had recommendations presented to them.

The student is not required to undertake any recommendations put forth by the Student Counseling Center. However, if they choose to do so, the Counseling Center assists with counseling services as dictated by the recommendations.

In addition, the International Student's office makes referrals for mandatory assessments when a student requests a reduced academic course load.

Psychiatric Services

Psychiatric services are provided to students in on-going therapy who may benefit from psychotropic medication. As an adjunct to the counseling process, students may be referred for evaluation and medication.

Third and fourth year psychiatry residents from UT Southwestern medical school treat students at the Counseling Center on the UTD campus. The arrangement allows for collaboration between staff therapists and the psychiatrists for client care. Close contact between the residents and staff counselors concerning clients provides holistic, effective treatment.

This year 87 students were treated with psychiatric interventions and numerous others were referred to private physicians for medications. Students who were seen by the psychiatrists had a total of 443 sessions during the year.

Compared to the prior year, there was an 55% increase in the number of students receiving psychiatric services and an 88% increase in the number of psychiatric evaluations and follow up appointments. This year, third year psychiatry residents from UT Southwestern medical school began treating students at the Counseling Center on the UTD campus. Students requiring psychiatric services were previously seen by consulting psychiatrists in the community. The residents presence at UTD allowed for greater access by students to mental health services. As can be seen from the dramatic increase in psychiatric service delivery, students took advantage of these services when made more available.

Testing Services

As a tool in the evaluation process, psychological testing is often useful. Testing serves as both a validation of diagnosis and an objective evaluation of psychological functioning.

At the UTD Student Counseling Center, testing is done in conjunction with therapy and not as an end in itself. The staff of the Counseling Center has the expertise in and availability of most of the commonly used psychological instruments. Tests are available for evaluation of general psychological functioning, interpersonal relationships, depression, anxiety, and cognitive functioning.

During the year, 81 tests were administered to 54 students.

Counseling Center Special Services

Personal Development Library:

The Counseling Center library is available for student use and consists of books, audio tapes and video tapes. Books and audio tapes cover a variety of topics in areas such as emotional development, addiction recovery, gender issues, skill building, etc. This material may be checked out for a period of two weeks. Video tapes are available for on-site viewing only.

During the year, 106 books were checked out.

Relaxation Room:

Due to lack of space, the relaxation room was only available for part of the year. However, before it was discontinued, numerous students took advantage of this quiet room in order to “destress” or recover from a troubling emotional experience.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Student Counseling Center

The Counseling Center collected data on client satisfaction with services. This allows the center to evaluate information concerning the Counseling Center programs. The results of the survey were as follows:

Client Satisfaction Survey (given after first visit)	
1 = not at all 2 = not very much 3 = neutral 4 = some 5 =very much	
Ease of making appointment	4.4
Friendliness of the reception staff	4.7
How the reception staff listened to what you had to say	4.6
How the reception staff explained what needed to be done to address your needs	4.8
Time between making an appointment and being seen	4.2
Availability of Appointment times	4.1
The check-in process	4.2
The waiting area	4.6

Results of the survey indicate an overall high level of satisfaction by students with their initial experience at the Counseling Center. Scores suggest a very positive experience by students with their contact with counseling center staff.

Counseling Outcomes

Report Cards for the Counseling Center

Data is collected with regards to students' evaluations of their counseling experience. This data is collected from surveys administered during the fall and spring semesters. This allows the center to evaluate information concerning the Counseling Center programs. Without compromising client confidentiality, we can assess the overall impact of counseling on a number of variables and answer important questions concerning the effectiveness of the counseling process. Overall, students report being very pleased with counseling services. In addition, they report making significant progress as a result of their counseling experience. The following table reflects data from the past year.

Counseling Process (given after first visit)	1=Low, 5=High
My visit was handled in a professional manner.	4.8
My counselor is knowledgeable.	4.8
My counselor helped me clarify my problems.	4.7
My first session met my expectations.	4.8
I believe my expectations for counseling will be met.	4.6

Counselor Ratings by Students (given after first visit)	1=Low, 5=High
(1) Indifferent – (5) Interested	4.7
(1) Judgmental - (5) Accepting (non-judgmental)	4.6
(1) Cold - (5) Warm	4.5
(1) Not Understanding - (5) Accepting	4.6
(1) Culturally Insensitive - (5) Culturally Sensitive	4.6
(1) Ineffective – (5) Effective	4.6

Counseling Outcomes (given after multiple counseling sessions) 1=Low, 5=High	
I am functioning better in my personal / social life.	3.9
I am functioning better in my academic life.	3.9
Counseling helped me deal better with the problems for which I sought help.	4.1
My contact with the Counseling Center helped me continue my education.	4.6
If you were to need help again would you come back to Counseling Center?	3.9
If a student friend were in need of counseling, I would recommend the UTD Student Counseling Center.	4.7
Changes with Counseling: (given after multiple counseling sessions)	
Reduced Anxiety	75%
Improved Self-Confidence	62%
Reduced Depression	54%
Improved Academic Performance	59%
Improved Relationships	57%
Workshop and Outreach presentations 1=Low, 5=High	
Usefulness of information presented	4.4
Presentations of Concepts	4.4
Ease of understanding	4.7
Audience/presenter interaction	4.5
Usefulness of Handouts	4.3
Overall Rating of the Program	4.5

Results of the survey indicate an overall positive level of satisfaction by students with their counseling. Consistent with past findings, students would return for services if they needed help again and would refer a friend to the Counseling Center.

Reaching out to the Campus Programs & Contacts

Workshops

In an effort to assist students gain skills important for academic and life success, the Counseling Center provides workshops on a variety of topics. Programs are designed to assist students in improving their academic and personal skills.

Due to staff being extremely busy with counseling and crisis intervention in the fall, in order to meet the demand for clinical services, the number of workshops was reduced in the spring. Despite reducing the number of workshops by nearly half, there was only a reduction of about ¼ in the number of student participants. Sixteen workshops were presented to a total of 148 students.

Outreach Programs

Outreach programs are presentations made on a variety of topics to student organizations, student life staff groups and other student groups such as the OTM's and PA's. Twelve programs were provided to 410 individuals.

Classroom Presentations

Presentations were made on a variety of topics to Rhetoric or other classes in which the instructor invited Counseling Center staff to present to their students. The Counseling Center made fourteen presentations to 1111 students in academic classes.

Awareness and Information Programs

The Counseling Center participates in a wide variety of collaborative programs on campus. These programs vary in nature from information tables (for example during Alcohol Awareness week), interactive booths (for example as a part of Quickie Break) or brief presentations during orientations. Counseling Center staff participated as a part of a panel of speakers in the new Parent Transition seminars which were added to Orientation. The staff also participated in the "Take Back the Night" rally.

Thirty-six awareness and information programs were made to 1720 individuals.

The following chart delineates types of outreach programs, the number of sessions and number of participants in the programs.

<u>Workshops</u>	<u>Sessions</u>	<u>Participants</u>
Memory and concentration	3	44
Stress management	4	25
Test taking	2	24
Time management	5	52
Roommate Survival	1	2
Anger management	1	1
Total	16	148
<u>Outreach Programs</u>		
Grief and loss	2	21
Coping with interview anxiety	1	10
Time Management	1	35
Community outreach	1	10
Counseling center services	6	289
Team Building	1	45
Total	12	410
<u>Classroom Presentations</u>		
Rhet-depression & suicide	11	1060
Stress management	2	39
Professor burnout and self care	1	12
Total	14	1111
<u>Awareness and Information programs</u>		
Drug carnival	1	50
AOD Event	2	360
Quickie Break	1	75
Campus services panel	13	735
Parents orientation panel	3	75
Cometville carnival	2	62
International stud orientation	2	45
Orientation info fair	1	35
Counseling center services	3	60
Safe Zone activity	5	121
Media Contact	2	2
Date Rape awareness	1	100
Total	36	1720

Departmental Educational Programs

The Counseling Center has a commitment to maintaining high standards in the quality of counseling services provided to UTD students; therefore, professional enhancement activities are a vital part of each week's schedule.

1. In-Service Presentations

As part of an on-going professional education program for Counseling Center staff, presentations on a variety of topics of interest to mental health professionals are made regularly by professionals from the University and community.

2. Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are held weekly and deal with administrative and service issues.

3. Graduate Intern Training and Supervision

In order to provide additional clinical staff, the Counseling Center offers an APA accredited internship program through the Dallas Metropolitan Consortium in Psychology (DMCP). It is a predoctoral internship in professional psychology and is an organized training program established by Galaxy Counseling Center, Southern Methodist University Counseling and Testing Center and the Student Counseling Center at The University of Texas at Dallas.

DMCP is a full-time, twelve-month internship-training program. Interns rotate between two training sites simultaneously and work full time. Interns maintain 20 to 25 clinical contact hours each week. In addition to providing clinical services, interns receive individual and group supervision and may assist in consultation and outreach.

4. Group Supervision/Case Conference

The staff meets on a weekly basis to discuss clinical cases with the entire clinical staff. Diagnosis and treatment plans are reviewed. This is a group supervision process.

History

Service	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Change ('05 to '06)
<u>Counseling</u>						
Sessions	2319	2663	2775	2340	2855	22%
Individuals	392	416	435	465	514	11%
<u>Group Appointments</u>			190	193	92	-52%
<u>Workshops</u>						
Workshops	22	23	19	30	16	-47%
Individuals	116	119	84	200	148	-26%
<u>Classroom & Outreach Presentations</u>						
Presentations	25	21	44	19	14	-26%
Individuals	359	539	1181	869	1111	28%
<u>Psychiatric</u>						
Sessions	230	214	271	236	443	88%
Individuals	81	77	84	56	87	55%