

Alma Mater Society Impact Grants

2017 – 2019

The AMS has awarded Impact Grants for the following research projects over the past two years:

Recipients, 2018-2019

Graduate Student Mental Health and Wellbeing at UBC

\$4395

Lily Ivanova, Department of Sociology

This research project investigates graduate student mental health and wellbeing in six UBC departments. In each, a lead researcher will coordinate a survey and focus group-based study to gain a better understanding of graduate wellbeing, with the goal of designing solutions for better mental health on campus. A final report summarizing the results in each department will be used as the basis for the creation of department-level Graduate Wellbeing Committees (composed of faculty, staff and graduate students), which will work to implement strategies to improve graduate student wellbeing. The project will work with Graduate Student Wellbeing Network, an existing network of more than 40 graduate students from various UBC departments.

Graduate Student Mental Health and Wellbeing at UBC

\$3000

Sara Fudjack, School of Social Work

This study seeks to learn about the experiences of UBC students living in recovery from alcohol and other drugs, with the goal of enhancing recovery-inclusive supports and services on UBC's campus. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, this project will enhance understanding of UBC students' experiences of working to initiate and maintain recovery, while simultaneously navigating social and academic life. Findings will be shared with UBC stakeholders, including the Office of the President, the Wellness Centre, and Student Development & Services. Dissemination of findings will be accompanied by recommendations for enhancing well-being, achieving academic success, and bolstering social supports for students living in recovery in ways that are culturally sensitive and stigma-free.

University Testing for Improved Academic Outcomes

\$3000

Vivian Tsang, Faculty of Medicine

This experimental study investigates how much the content of test-based learning transfers to related concepts that have not been formally tested. It will accomplish this by coordinating a team that administers multiple choice tests and examines how well students are able to retain information over a two week period – and how well they are able to transfer that retention into analysis of related but different material. Students will be recruited from medicine, biology and psychology to take the tests, which will be designed by the researcher, in collaboration with senior scholars in the Centre of Health Education Scholarship. The research results will be shared with department heads, professors and the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology, and submitted to a scholarly journal for publication.

Recipients, 2017-2018

First-year University Transitions and Mental Health

\$3000

Thalia Lang, Department of Psychology

This study examines how stressors and social anxiety relate to suicidal ideation among first-year undergraduates at UBC. The investigation expands upon an earlier study – also funded by an AMS Impact Grant – which evaluated related factors and the rate of suicidal ideation and attempts. The current study employs an online survey taken by first-year undergraduate students enrolled in psychology courses, drawn from the Human Subject Pool. The results of both studies will be shared with the UBC Board of Governors, the University’s Orientation Committee, and the UBC VP Students Office.

Syllabi and Student Wellness Project

\$3000

Stella Baehring, Department of Psychology

Recognizing that syllabi are the principal tool that connects students’ and professors’ course expectations, this project investigates how we can better design student-centered syllabi that support learning at UBC. It examines the structural, organizational and interpersonal elements of syllabi, and their association with student wellbeing. The study employs a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, including a 40-question survey of students, focus groups with both faculty and students, and regression analysis. The study’s findings will be shared with the UBC Senate and distributed to heads of departments around the University; the results will also serve as the basis for a downloadable student-centred syllabus template that will be made available to the public at no cost.