

Policy Number: E-10
Title: Mental Health Advocacy

Passed: August 1, 2018
Expires:

Summary:

Directs the AMS's goals relating to advocating to the University and provincial government for increased mental health resources and supports.

Number & Title:

E-10: Mental Health Advocacy

Effective Date/Expiry Date (if applicable):

August 01, 2018

Approval Date:

August 01, 2018

Policy Type:

External Policy

Review Date:

This policy shall be reviewed every two (2) years.

Responsible Body:

AMS Advocacy Committee

Authority:

AMS Code of Procedure Section II, article 11(1)

"Council may create external and internal policies as well as combined policies."

Purpose and Goals:

This policy is designed to:

- 1) Ensure that UBC increases the resources that are allocated toward mental health programs, resources and support for UBC students.
- 2) Outline the specific efforts to be undertaken to accomplish the AMS's advocacy goals to improve the resources and supports available to students regarding mental health.
- 3) Promote improved mental health at UBC.

Applicability:

This policy is applicable to the AMS's stance toward the University and toward all levels of government, especially the provincial and federal levels.

Exclusions:

There are no exclusions for this policy.

Definitions:

<i>Mental Illness</i>	shall mean the term used to refer to a variety of mental disorders that can be diagnosed
<i>Mental Health</i>	shall mean the balance in all aspects of one's life, including but not limited to social, physical, spiritual, economic and mental wellbeing. Mental health ranges on a spectrum from healthy to unhealthy, with diagnosable poor levels of mental health often labelled as a particular illness
<i>Mental Health Accommodations</i>	shall mean the academic and other accommodations provided to a student struggling with poor mental health after consultation with the student in question
<i>Mental Health Resources and Supports</i>	shall mean the variety of accessible on- and off-campus support centres that provide short or long term care or information in the form of resources or referrals needed to improve mental health

Policy:

Whereas UBC has identified supporting the ongoing development of sustainable, healthy and connected communities as a priority in UBC's Strategic Plan 2018;

Whereas the AMS regards strong mental health supports and frameworks as a key factor in student success;

Whereas the AMS acknowledges the rising incidence of poor mental health and mental illness at UBC and across North American post-secondary institutions;

Whereas the AMS recognizes that the state of each person's mental health changes throughout their life, especially during changing personal, professional and academic circumstances;

Whereas the AMS recognizes the existing stigma surrounding poor mental health and mental illness and asking for mental health support;

Whereas the AMS recognizes that there is no single solution or approach that can be taken to address varying levels of poor mental health and mental illness at UBC;

- 1) Be it resolved that the AMS calls on the UBC Administration to significantly expand the resources, funding and physical space allocated to existing UBC mental health support services and on-campus organizations and programs that provide students with mental health support;

- 2) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls on UBC to allocate more funding towards research to study the state of mental health at UBC and possible approaches towards its improvement, and to make this research accessible to students and the UBC community once conducted;
- 3) Be it further resolved that the AMS hold UBC accountable to recommendations outlined in strategic plans and commitments addressing the improvement of UBC student mental health and wellbeing;
- 4) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls on the UBC Administration to acknowledge the importance of strong mental health and mental health supports and resources, especially at post-secondary institutions;
- 5) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls on the UBC Administration to provide a greater amount of support, resources and outreach to the student demographic groups that report experiencing a disproportionately greater amount of mental health strain;
- 6) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls on the UBC Administration to include information about internal and external mental health resources on university platforms highly accessed by students, including but not limited to course syllabi and the learning management system;
- 7) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls on the UBC Administration to determine and provide students struggling with poor mental health with an appropriate level of academic and other accommodations, after consultation with the student in question;
- 8) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls on the UBC Administration to re-evaluate the extent and scope of accommodations made for each student as per the student's request and the timeline set during the initial consultation;
- 9) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls on the UBC Administration to increase student outreach and education efforts by utilizing a wide variety of outlets and pursuing student engagement;
- 10) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls on the UBC Administration to consult with students, mental health professionals and mental health organizations to determine the most effective and up-to-date practices for mental health care;
- 11) Be it further resolved that the AMS lobby the provincial government to collect data and report on mental health at post-secondary institutions;
- 12) Be it further resolved that the AMS pursue relationships with off-campus mental health support services to promote and encourage an off-campus mental health support network;
- 13) Be it further resolved that the AMS work with other student societies at Canadian post-secondary institutions to collectively lobby for increased mental health funding and support.
- 14) Be it further resolved that the AMS calls upon the UBC Administration to consider the importance of mental health on all wellness strategies created at UBC, and to embed education surrounding mental health literacy within the work that is done.

Consultations:

The following groups have been consulted during the development of this policy: AMS Policy Advisor, AMS President, AMS VP Academic & University Affairs, AMS VP External Affairs, AMS Speakeasy, and AMS Advocacy Committee.

History:

This is the fifth draft of the first version of this policy.

Related Policies:

AMS

1. Policy E-6: Sexual Assault Policy
2. AMS Relations with External Organizations

UBC

1. *Shaping UBC's Next Century*, UBC Strategic Plan 2018
2. Policy 14: Response to At-risk Behaviour
3. Policy 73: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
4. Policy 131: Sexual Assault and Other Sexual Misconduct

Other

1. Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities & Colleges

Appendix/Appendices:

There are no appendices for this policy.