A JOINT RESOLUTION CONCERNING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT BODY MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY

WHEREAS, the Undergraduate Student Government is committed to advocating for the mental health of the Undergraduate Student Body;

WHEREAS, up to one in four college students suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder, and of those students, only about 13% actually seek treatment ¹;

WHEREAS, the major factors that contribute to low utilization rate of professional mental health services - and thus lower retention rates in universities - are high social stigma, lack of knowledge of resources offered, and skepticism of efficacy of care ²;

WHEREAS, these barriers to care for mental health issues are deeply rooted in negative perceptions of mental health issues as well as a lack of knowledge about efficacy and access of care;

WHEREAS, a mental health literacy module would address a crucial gap in knowledge about mental health issues, resources, and treatment - a root cause of the lack of help-seeking behavior among college students;

WHEREAS, this module would have the intended effect of decreasing barriers to care through increased literacy;


WHEREAS, it has been shown that a mental health literacy curriculum leads to increased help-seeking behavior and lower levels of stigma by students and faculty, leading to greater rates of treatment in the institution;

WHEREAS, decreasing barriers of care through increased mental health literacy would provide institutions with economic returns through higher retention rates and improved academic outcomes according to a Healthy Minds study, managing the depression of just 100 students would prevent 6 drop-outs, translating into $240,000 saved per year in tuition on average;

WHEREAS, if the lack of mental health literacy is not addressed during such a formative period of personal development, college graduates would likely bring this issue into the workforce, contributing to an overall lower productivity in society;

WHEREAS, there currently is no university-mandated requirement at the University of Connecticut for incoming freshmen or transfer students to be educated about mental health issues, risk factors, treatments, and on-campus resources through a Mental Health Literacy Module;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Undergraduate Student Government calls for the implementation of a mandated Mental Health Literacy Module for all incoming freshmen and transfer students at the University of Connecticut that i) educates them on the common risk factors and mental health issues that are widespread among college students, ii) instructs them on healthy coping mechanisms to promote wellness and adjust to their new college environment, iii) dispels common misconceptions and stigmas about mental health issues and seeking treatment, and iv) points to accessible mental health services both on and off-campus that students can readily utilize if they require professional care;

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THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Undergraduate Student Government encourages the implementation of an Act by the Connecticut General Assembly which would require that all Connecticut post-secondary institutions mandate a Mental Health Literacy Module for their incoming freshmen and transfer students that i) educates them on the common risk factors and mental health issues that are widespread among college students, ii) instructs them on healthy coping mechanisms to promote wellness and adjust to their new college environment, iii) dispels common misconceptions and stigmas about mental health issues and seeking treatment, and iv) points to accessible mental health services both on and off-campus that students can readily utilize if they require professional care.

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Certified: Enacted:

November 28th, 2018 November 28th, 2018
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Speaker of the Senate President of the Student Body