

Scanlan Center for School Mental Health

STATE OF IOWA HIGHER EDUCATION STAFF & FACULTY MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING STUDY: Understanding Faculty & Staff Mental Health & Perceptions of Student Mental Health

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Rationale

National data indicate that students, staff, and faculty are experiencing increasing mental health problems, longer-term pandemic impact, and work-related burnout.

Faculty, staff, and student wellness is influenced by interconnected and critical domains of institutional and personal wellness. This understanding is reflected in the University of Iowa Strategic Plan initiative to “Embed well-being and mental health into all aspects of campus culture to better support students, faculty, and staff.”

Need for a State of Iowa assessment across the Regent universities, the community college systems, and the private colleges and universities' local trends and impacts.

Research Questions

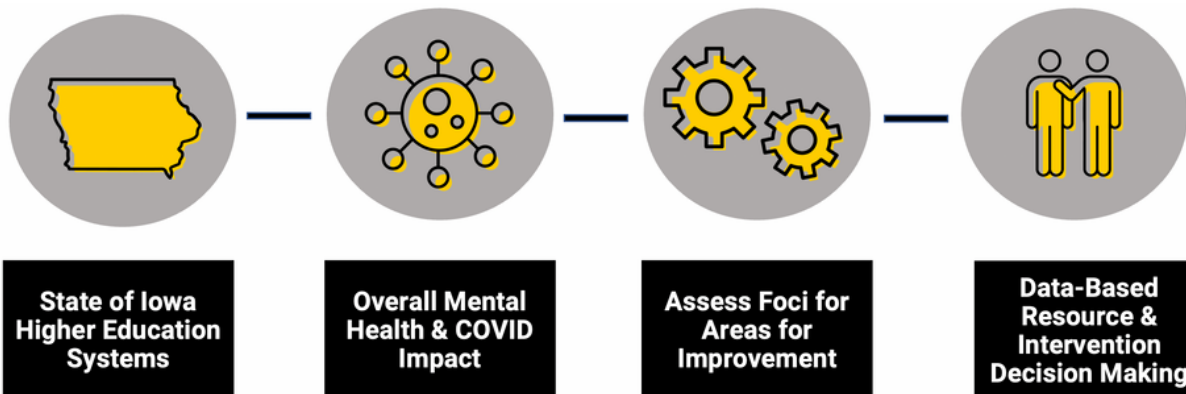
What is the state of the state in Iowa higher education concerning:



Staff and Faculty

- *Mental health and well-being and perceived institutional support for mental health and well-being*
- *Confidence and competence to respond to and manage student distress*

Overall Purpose



Background: What We Know Nationally and Locally

National and local data point out that a) faculty recognize the importance of responding to student mental health concerns, but b) feel underprepared to do so. Faculty c) welcome additional training, but are also d) managing their own mental health needs.

According to Lipson et al. (2021), while 95%+ of faculty/staff say it is their responsibility to connect to students experiencing psychological distress:



- 58% don't feel prepared to recognize a student exhibiting distress.
- 66% don't feel prepared to approach students to discuss concerns.
- 49% don't feel prepared to recommend mental health services to students.

Majority of Staff/Faculty



- Would welcome training in how to support students and believe these trainings should be mandatory.
- Report lack of training, insufficient institutional support, and lack of support for their own mental health.

According to the Chronicle of Higher Education/Fidelity (2021)



- 69% note feeling extremely or very stressed at work.
- 35% have considered leaving higher education in the last year.

According to U of I LiveWell (2021)



- 22% experience health risks due to unmanaged stress.
- 25% experience difficulty concentrating due to own health concerns.
- 29% experience difficulty concentrating due to financial stress.
- 31% experience difficulty concentrating due to caregiving responsibilities.
- 56% experience difficulty concentrating from having too much to do and insufficient time.



Value-Added Opportunities of the Study & Workforce Impact

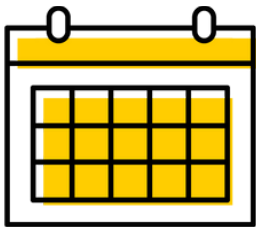
- ✓ Acquire faculty and staff input to bolster engagement
- ✓ Develop a rounded dataset to include flourishing in addition to stressors
- ✓ Create a State of Iowa mental health workforce database to guide
 - Resource allocation and targeted programming development
 - Workforce improvement and retention opportunities
 - Understanding campus cultural influences on mental health
 - Needs for and commitment levels to distress management training
 - Impact of the pandemic and meaning for work-life integration
- ✓ Create a dashboard for campus-customized reporting

Study Plan and Timeline

Study Plan

- ➔ Survey Development
- ➔ Recruit Iowa Higher Education Institutions
 - Phase I: Regent Universities
 - Phase II: Community College & Private Schools
- ➔ Survey Distribution & Data Collection
- ➔ Data Analysis
- ➔ Final State Reports and Broader Publications

Timeline



- Fall 2022: Survey development
- Spring 2023: Survey distribution to Regent University staff and faculty
- Summer 2023: Data analysis
- Fall 2023: Publish dataset and reports

