Creating Healthy Work Environments 2019

Well-Being Initiative for On-Line Nursing Students

Arlene Pericak, DA
School of Nursing, George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA

Angela McNelis, PhD, RN, FAAN, CNE, ANEF
School of Nursing, George Washington University School of Nursing, Washington, D.C., DC, USA

Introduction:

Nurse burnout is an issue for students who will enter employment in healthcare institutions and unaddressed can lead to reduced quality care and work attrition. Moreover, burnout contributes to the nursing shortage and increased institutional costs. To confront the problem, healthcare institutions have implemented initiatives that have resulted in improvement of the physical and mental health of nurses. The literature, however, provides scant evidence on initiatives for burnout prevention for nursing students.

During an on-campus event (April 2018), online NP students were asked to complete a survey regarding wellness and well-being for online students. Response rate was robust with 198 of the 200 students completing the survey, and 30 of these students participating in four focus groups. We asked students to think about their experience thus far as a graduate student in the SON. Using the questions below, we asked them to please indicate their perceptions of the University's wellness culture and environment by circling a response.

Summary of what we found:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe the University has a vested interest in your health and personal wellness?</td>
<td>3.2653</td>
<td>.81084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe the University has a culture and environment that promotes health and wellness for its faculty, staff, and students?</td>
<td>3.3858</td>
<td>.74464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe the leaders at the University are actively engaged in promoting and role-modeling health and wellness?</td>
<td>3.3316</td>
<td>.72834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think health and wellness programs are readily available to you at the University?</td>
<td>2.9388</td>
<td>.81419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that the communications you receive about wellness programs, activities, and services are clear?</td>
<td>3.0408</td>
<td>.83412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that it is important for the University to promote health and wellness for faculty, staff and students?</td>
<td>4.4798</td>
<td>.64288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you found it easy to engage in health and wellness programs and activities at the University?</td>
<td>2.5538</td>
<td>.80008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How satisfied are you with the current wellness programs and services offered at the University. 2.9797 .54360
To what degree does the SON support your participation in health and wellness activities and events? 2.9745 .76081
To what extent do you believe the University cares about your health and personal wellness? 3.2944 .76573
To what extent do you agree with the statement, “I have a substantially higher overall wellbeing because of the University”? 2.4260 .93006
It is difficult to balance my home/family/work life and academic responsibilities. 3.9898 .95292
Online self-help videos viewable at any time. 3.3959 1.02797
Online self-help fact sheets viewable at any time. 3.4235 1.00218
Synchronous online sessions on topic of interest offered on a weekday morning. 3.0544 .99131
Synchronous online sessions on topic of interest offered on a weekday afternoon. 3.0812 .96018
Synchronous online sessions on topic of interest offered on a weekday evening. 3.2959 .93050
Synchronous online sessions on topic of interest offered on a weekday weekend. 3.1980 1.00833

Overall, most students did not know what health and wellness resources were available to them at the University, but agreed that a culture and environment that promotes wellness is important. Most said it was not easy to engage in wellness as online students. Students were overwhelmed with work/life balance, and with too much busy work in courses (such as discussion boards). Students reported that obtaining clinical sites was a major stressor and wanted assistance in this area. Students want self-help videos and fact sheets to access and use at their convenience. If synchronized sessions were offered, majority asked for evenings and wanted them to be interactive.

Plan:

Leverage existing campus resources for online students and inform students about content and access. Develop and deliver virtual sessions every month (synchronized/evening) on topics including work/life balance, meditation, yoga, and anxiety/depression. Additionally, develop and deliver faculty development sessions to increase awareness of challenges students face. Finally, review courses and assignments to reduce “busy work” and develop strategies to assist students to obtain quality clinical sites.

Title:

Well-Being Initiative for On-Line Nursing Students
Abstract Summary:
Graduate on-line students are challenged with work-life balance and need support to maintain well-being and prevent burn out. By attending this session, you will hear what we found and what students want regarding wellness and well-being. You will learn about our well-being initiative for on-line nursing students.

Content Outline:

Introduction
Survey Results
Summary
Plan

First Primary Presenting Author

Primary Presenting Author
Arlene Pericak, DA
George Washington University.
School of Nursing
Associate Professor
Washington DC
USA

**Professional Experience:** Assistant Professor of Nursing, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. August 2012 to present. • Primary teaching responsibilities in the family nurse practitioner track. Responsibilities include teaching on-line physical assessment, and coordinating and teaching a didactic and clinical nurse practitioner courses which include supervision of NP students and faculty in the following clinical areas; pediatrics/adolescents, adult, obstetrics, gynecology, geriatric and specialty sites. • Advisement of FNP students. • Serve as role model and mentor for new faculty. • Proficient in Blackboard management, Quality Matters and Remote Proctoring. Director, Graduate Nursing Program, The Sage Colleges, Troy, NY, June, 2006 to June 2012.

**Author Summary:** Dr. Pericak is an experience faculty teaching graduate students for more than 20 years. She is an Associate Professor at the George Washington School of Nursing. She teaches full time in an on-line nurse practitioner program.

Second Author

Angela McNelis, PhD, RN, FAAN, CNE, ANEF
George Washington University School of Nursing
School of Nursing
Professor and Associate Dean for Scholarship, Innovation, and Clinical Science
Washington, D.C.
USA

**Professional Experience:** Dr. McNelis is a Professor and Associate Dean for Scholarship, Innovation and Clinical Science at George Washington University School of Nursing. She has over 15 years experience as a nurse educator and researcher.

**Author Summary:** Dr. McNelis is a Professor of Nursing and Associate Dean for Scholarship, Innovation and Clinical Science at George Washington University School of Nursing. She has over 15 years experience as a nurse educator and researcher.