



Student Life EPPC Subcommittee Report
Educational Policies and Practices Committee
NCSSM Board of Trustees
September 22, 2023

Department/Area Updates

Campus Health and Safety

Like the past several years, we see a slight uptick in the number of students testing positive for covid19 as students return to campus. We continue to track the number of cases internally and will follow up with health departments as needed for any additional guidance. We are happy to share that we have very few students who are off campus currently related to covid19 (0.2%).

Student/ Employee Flu Clinics are scheduled for Thursday September 28 on both the Durham and Morganton campuses. In addition, we anticipate having blood drives in October or November.

We anticipate having a Covid-19 Vaccine clinic for both campuses in mid to late October. We continue to encourage the community to stay up to date with their vaccinations.

The clinic is implementing a new program this year called itMatters. This program is in partnership with UNCG/Prevention Strategies for both Campuses (1 module done with 70% compliance). All 17 system institutions are implementing it this year. Topics include:

- Sleep Wellness (Fall)
- Alcohol (Fall)
- Mental Well-being (Fall)
- Stress Management (Fall)
- Sexual Violence prevention (Spring) and
- Intersection of Alcohol and Sex (Spring)

Additional information about the [Durham](#) and [Morganton](#) clinics are now available via a Google site.

Counseling Services

New grant-funded positions providing wellness support to our community:

- Hired new Case Manager, Dasni Lakpriya on the DUR campus and Cloe Graf on the MOR campus. Case Managers provide resource and referral services to students who need therapy and medication management. They also bridge the gap between clinical and counseling services and care for students who require both.
- Posted a new Wellness Counselor and Program Specialist to begin in the fall. This position will create and facilitate programming for students, parents, faculty, and staff.



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Update on Mental Health Funding for the 22-23 and 2023-2024 school year

- NCSSM Counseling Services assisted students who were unable to access therapeutic treatment due to financial need or other barriers. Students were able to receive therapeutic treatment and/or psychoeducational evaluations for crisis intervention, ongoing therapy, and psychological and psychoeducational testing. For the 2022-2023 school year, \$83,815 helped 28 students receive the treatment they needed. Students would have been unable to access needed treatment without this funding.

Testimonials:

- “My overall experience with a school-funded therapist was the most impactful experience I have had. I grew as a person and became self-aware of the problems I needed to fix in my life. Meeting with my therapist was the only time I felt safe to be vulnerable about my issues...I wish to have these services continued for other students like myself who are scared to be vulnerable and won’t open up.” - Anonymous
- “There was a time when I would have an alarm going off every five minutes for an hour, my roommate woke me up, and my parents called me, yet I still would not get out of bed to go to class. I wasn’t sure why. Through this grant, I met my therapist. I finally received a diagnosis of ADHD, and I also began to receive medication to treat it. I ended the semester just shy of my goal of all A’s, with a B in biochemistry - Anonymous

Meet & Greet event for students

- Both campuses hosted an informal event with cookies or brownies introducing the new Case Managers, interns for the 2023-2024 school year, and the new Wellness Counselor in Morganton. Now both campuses have two Wellness Counselors on site.

College Fairs

- MOR held a successful College Fair on Friday, September 8 with over 40 colleges in attendance
- DUR will host their College Fair on Thursday, September 28. So far, 40 colleges will be in attendance.

Junior and Senior Meetings

- DUR and MOR have met with juniors and seniors in large group orientation meetings. DUR and MOR have or will host small group meetings for seniors and juniors. Meetings include information about counseling services and resources and college planning. Counselors are happy to be back for the 23-24 school year. They are already hard at work meeting with their students and assisting them with wellness, college, and academic needs. Counselors continue to meet with students individually and in small and large group sessions. As of Friday, September 15, DUR counselors have held over 400 individual meetings with students.



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Residence Education, Housing, and Dining

We are excited to reopen our dining campus on the Durham campus. In a short period of time, we have been able to see the positive impact. It has exceeded our expectations and look forward to continuing to evolve the dining experience.

Residence Education: All Juniors are taking NCSSM Cornerstone during the fall semester. The course provides exposure to life skills that will assist in their transition to and through NCSSM. In the spring semester, all juniors take Career and College Planning. This course, which is co-taught between Residence Education and Counseling Services, provides students an opportunity to get valuable information about the college application process. It serves as a springboard to help students navigate the process during their senior year.

Each senior takes an elective course of their choice on a topic that they have an interest in (ex: public speaking, financial planning). All Residence Education courses meet once a week.

Morganton Student Life

Starting out the year, the Student Life staff has grown to accommodate the doubling of the student body. We are now at two assistant directors, 7 community coordinators, and 1 senior community coordinator. Senior leadership students moved to campus prior to orientation and junior move-in to help welcome their junior peers. Move-ins went well across all the different student groups and the Student Life staff facilitated several days of educational and social programming to encourage students to acclimate to campus life. Programming highlights include a junior class day of service that was performed at more than 15 sites around Morganton as well as a campus wide hall olympics.

As the students are getting into the semester, Student Government has begun its first session as a fully functional group that is all on Morganton campus. Last year Durham and Morganton had a joint Student Government. The students are excited to have campus based leadership this year and to be able to collaborate with their counterparts in Durham. Student organizations have begun the chartering process with over 40 student organizations and academic competition groups starting out for the semester. These groups are actively working to create an active and vibrant culture on campus.

Student Life is teaching senior electives in residential education for the first time. Morganton juniors are all enrolled in a Cornerstone Course where they learn everything from time management skills to how to make meaningful connections to what resources are available on campus. Senior students have been able to choose from a collection of electives and will each take one course in residential education this year.

Dining services in Morganton started the semester with the cafeteria and coffee shop fully open to the campus community and continue to make efforts to bring their menus online for students



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to be able to have easy access to nutritional information and ingredient information. They anticipate being available fully for student use in the coming months.

Morganton has opened its school store to be a regularly open functional shop that is available to the campus community.

Physical Activity and Wellness 2023 Fall NCSSM Athletics Updates

Durham Athletics

176 athletes participating in Fall Athletics with 21 varsity sports offered

- Fall: Women's Tennis, Women's Golf, Men's Soccer, Men and Women XC, Women's Volleyball, Competition Cheerleading
- Winter: Men and Women's Swimming, Men and Women's Basketball, Men's and Women's Indoor Track, Wrestling
- Spring: Men's Tennis, Women's Soccer, Men's Golf, Baseball, Softball, Men and Women's Outdoor Track

Renovation Projects/Impact on Athletic Spaces

Due to modular housing construction, the size of the soccer field has been reduced and access is limited. With the addition of a retaining pond in the baseball outfield, it is unlikely that the baseball team will be able to play games on campus for the duration of the project and funds will be used to provide additional support and cover costs of renting field space for the team. The softball team will plan to play on the existing baseball field area. Work will need to be done to install outfield fencing and other safety measures.

Many of the upgrades previously done on the athletic fields have been removed during this construction process. The outdoor batting cage has been removed to run utilities. The turtle cage used for batting practice was damaged during the storm on August 15. Other fencing upgrades on all of the fields have also been removed.

Care needs to be taken to make sure we can replace and upgrade facilities to minimize the disturbance on the athletic fields.

PEC Gymnasium

The racquetball court areas have been used as a temporary server for the dining hall since last Fall. The department would like to repurpose this area as a multipurpose room now that the dining hall is back online. We are working with Facilities to move a plan forward with the hope of being able to begin work over the winter break. This additional space will help with logistical challenges as the PEC Gymnasium is used as the primary campus event space, in addition to its normal functions, while the ETC Auditorium is offline for renovations.



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We are hoping to work on completing some deferred maintenance projects (ex: painting all of the PEC and upgrading of locker rooms) in the near future.

Tennis courts

Our two on-campus tennis courts are deteriorating, cracked, and not safe to use on a consistent basis. Cost to redo the courts is \$150k+.

Morganton Athletics

105 athletes participating in Fall Athletics with 15 varsity sports offered

Fall: Womens' Tennis, Women's Golf, Men's Soccer, Men and Women XC, Women's Volleyball

Winter: Men and Women's Swimming, Men and Women's Basketball

Spring: Men's Tennis, Women's Soccer, Men's Golf, Men and Women's Track

3 Clubs with strong interest for potential varsity or competitive club sports (Cheer, Men's Volleyball, and Wrestling).

Student Services

Student Activities

Our Community Coordinator team was mostly new for our August move-in with only four CCs and 2 REI staff from the previous 2022 move-in. We had a lot of fresh energy and enthusiasm from both new and experienced staff. Our training focused on building our team, expectations and skills, and meeting colleagues across campus. Visitors to our training included members of the Counseling team, Admissions, CAAS, Health & Safety, and Campus Safety. While we are not yet fully staffed, we are close and (hopefully) by the time the board is meeting in late September, we will have our final CC hired. The Student Services team is excited to connect with students and build strong hall communities.

We devoted time to restorative practices and thinking of ways to apply those practices as part of the 80% of restorative practices that happen in community building versus the 20% spent addressing issues. When our RLAs moved in, we were ready to spend time with them and participate in elements of their training. For the second year in a row, we offered Restorative Practices training to our RLAs through Peaceful Schools. We also incorporated a restorative practices overview into our canvas orientation for all students. Justin Plummer, Assistant Director of Student Services & Equity Programming, completed Restorative Practices training last spring which allows him to offer training to our employees and students. He provided training for Durham and Morganton CCs, new faculty on both campuses, and a brief overview for current Durham employees. Our goal is to continue to integrate restorative practices into all areas at NCSSM to build a more resilient community.



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Canvas Orientation for students continues to be a valuable element of our orientation plan. We covered many of the same topics as last year but added in some additional prevention education around alcohol. We highlighted our newly updated institutional policy: Substance Abuse Prevention Program and Intervention Plan for Students in canvas orientation and in person on each campus along with companion [slides](#). Canvas Orientation provides a baseline of education and resources about our community that is expanded upon when students move onto campus. Canvas Orientation is identical for both of our residential campuses and the in person elements allow each campus to tailor orientation to their own specific needs.

The in person orientation on the Durham campus included the second year of “Homeroom” where small groups of students met with an adult and covered a host of information and spent time getting to know each other. We also provided large group sessions that helped to put names to faces and highlighted important information from Counseling, Student Services, Title IX, Campus Safety, and Student Government. As always, we offered many opportunities for students to engage with each other in icebreaker activities, ice cream socials, block parties, and hall meetings. One of the highlights of move-in weekend for me is to see our newly minted seniors emerge as leaders and the incredible bravery of our juniors moving into a new environment. It really is a magical transition that would not be possible without the CC team.

Just as students completed their first day of class and settled onto the bleachers for convocation, a storm blew in and within 20 minutes, we lost power. Our students behaved so well in the hot, dark, stuffy gym as we ensured that it was safe for them to move around campus. Perhaps unwisely given the lack of power, cell phone lights lit up the gym and some singing broke out. Over the next 24 hours without power, CCs and Student Life Staff kept campus safe for students, provided opportunities to charge devices, and offered some entertainment options for our students. Quick thinking SAB Coordinator, Kori Willoughby remembered that we had a significant quantity of frozen mini cheesecakes in a freezer from prom and pulled them out late on Tuesday night for students. We had games, slip n slide, and more all day Wednesday on campus. The Registrar, Jennifer Betz had the brainstorm to get Pelican’s, a local snow cone vendor, on campus to pass out free snow cones. Many thanks to plant facilities staff and campus safety for all of their work during the power outage.

We are building on the work we started last year with prevention education programs. Our [Student Life Seminar Series](#) continues to be a collaboration across campus with sessions sponsored by CAAS, Academic Programs, Counseling, Diversity, Campus Safety, Health & Safety, Student Services, and Residential Education. We’ve worked to make sure we can deliver the sessions on both campuses, when necessary we’ve scheduled alternating sessions so over the course of a month both campuses will receive the same sessions.



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Morganton and Durham are continuing to produce a student life newsletter to celebrate activities outside the classroom, share pictures, and recognize the work of Student Services specifically and Student Life in general. Our [August newsletter](#) included employee highlights, recaps of club fairs on both campuses, and the ever popular [SMath Second](#).

Title IX Update

Our Title IX Office continues to focus on prevention education. We shared information in Canvas and in person orientation for students and followed up by sharing [slides](#) and the [Title IX](#) site. Employees had an in person [orientation meeting](#) with a focus on Title IX and mandatory reporting (along with an overview of code of conduct.) Our [September Title IX newsletter](#) included reminders about prevention, upcoming events, and included links to past presentations.

Student and Constituent Support Services, Inc. (SCSSI)

In August, we were successfully able to lift up a new Shopify Point of Sale platform for both the Durham and Morganton school stores. The transition from Quickbooks POS, which was discontinued, provided an opportunity to review current stock on hand for both campuses and has resulted in both stores being able to process credit card and mobile device payments in addition to cash sales.

After a trial period in August of limited sales using the new POS system, Family Day on September 9 presented our first big test on both campuses. We closed the day out with over \$10,000 in sales for the Durham school store and over \$3,500 for Morganton. Our previous one day record was around \$7,500.

We are hoping to lift up an updated online school store option in the coming months and will share updates as we get closer to launch.

Our charter bus program is off to a great start again this year, thanks in large part to the support of Kevin Cromwell, our parent bus coordinators, and several employee volunteers. We have a total of seven extended weekend charter bus lines this school year, including four Durham-based buses (Asheville, Charlotte North, Charlotte South, and Wilmington) with 173 students served and three Morganton-based buses (Charlotte, Durham, Eastern NC/Benson) with 125 students served, for a total of 298 student riders.