UMAE February 11, 2021 Synopsis

Brigitte welcomed the group to the meeting and introduced the planning committee members. Brigitte presented the agenda and mentioned that today we have the following presenters:

Heather Nicholson – Virtual Advising Help Centre

David Ness – Counselling Resources/ Student Mental Health

Matthew Carvell – Advocacy

Heather gave a presentation on the services available through the Virtual Advising Help Centre. The centre opened on March 15, 2021. They now have extended hours.

The hours are:

Monday to Friday	8:30 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday	10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

There are plans to provide students with this information through MCO in order that student know there is someone available not just in regular office hours.

At present the centre has 12 student navigators who provide peer-to-peer advising and assistance on where to find information, both current and prospective students need, on the UM website. Student Navigators receive seven (7) hours of training as well as Aurora training in order to assist students who contact the centre. We also use SharePoint, that way the student navigators can access answers to often asked questions. This is updated regularly.

Heather meets with the student navigators daily to go over often asked questions and concerns that callers have.

In the first four weeks of being open 870 students have been assisted. Most contacts use the chat function (61%); this allows international students an easier access that calling. 33% of the students called and 6% of the students emailed for assistance. Phone calls usually last between 20 to 35 minutes, some a longer, we do not have a time limit on any call or chat.

The student navigators are third year and higher level students and these are student paid positions.

Student who contact the centre at given coaching via emails to make their transitions from the centre to the next UM contact easier.

There is a widget on the UM Learn page. The website to the Virtual Advising Centre is https://umanitoba.ca/virtual-advising-help-centre please feel free to share the link with students

To access Heather's presentation, please click on the following link https://sway.office.com/ioKpPHINt0lKXuw2?ref=Link You will be asked to sign in, you use your UM sign in details then you can view the presentation.

Brigitte thanked Heather for the presentation.

David Ness gave a presentation on SCC Services and Mental Health Responding. The presentation can be viewed at the attachment on the blog.

David explained that mental health is a dynamic state which is ever changing. The spectrum changes depending on how your day is going.

The group was put into breakout rooms to answer one of David's questions.

"why do you think so many youth are struggling with mental health?"

Each group had 5 minutes to discuss what they were finding assisting and dealing with student enquiries and what may be causing the students' stress levels to rise.

A discussion was held once everyone came back to the main room and part of the struggle is that students are not having peer-to-peer interaction and are feeling isolated.

David suggested that people may with to view a TedTalk by Adam Alter on technology
https://www.ted.com/talks/adam_alter_why_our_screens_make_us_less_happy

Counselling services are presently booking appointments 1 week in advance. We are suggesting that student register for group sessions and there is a Matching Stress and Distress session which is 3 workshops.

There is always the crisis support line information on the Counselling Services website https://umanitoba.ca/student-supports/counselling-resources-students and student can call our reception line at 204 474 8592. Workshops will be available in May and June for students.

At present we are unable to do Learning Disability assessments as these take 3 – 6 hours in-person contact and due to COVID cannot be done at this time. We do offer a screening at the moment, students will be assessed on information they provide on a questionnaire. Depending on the answers, students may be referred to Student Accessibility Services.

Another assessment we are unable to provide at present is for ADD or ADHD

Students should be encouraged to call our office to receive information. All services are free to students.

A discussion and question period was held.

- Any student who is registered has access to services at CSS.
- Graduated students are not eligible for services.
- Students do not have to be taking Spring/Summer courses but will be registering in the fall can access assistance
- If a student is not registered in classes at present and has been a student, and will register for next term they can access workshops only
- Encourage students to look at the workshops offered

Brigitte thanked David for his presentation.

Matthew from Advocacy explained their office is very busy at present. If you have a student who has an emergency, please reach out to Heather Morris or an Advocate directly as emergency spaces are held.

If you have a group of misconduct cases in a single course, please reach out to Advocacy and a hold will be placed on our schedule to allow for quick access to the single group. This is for multiple cases within a single class only.

Brigitte thanks everyone for being her today and hopes everyone is doing well.

Next meeting is June 10, 2021 as convocation is the week of June 13th.

Adjourned: 4:10 p.m.