

Mental Health and Wellness Committee

Meeting Notes – Thursday, 5/26/2011, 12:30 – 2 pm

Counseling Orientation Room

Attendees: Rosalyn Chan, Penny Johnson, Chris Rolen, Daniel Sanidad, Rita Grogan, Bianka Guardino, Alicia Martinez, Helen Ostrander

- I. BIT (Behavioral Intervention Team) – Penny began BIT portion of today's meeting by sharing the "Threat Assessment" handout from Grossmont College. The main purpose of the Mission BIT would be to provide input re: identified persons who exhibit patterns of unusual behavior perceived as "threatening." This could also be shown in disturbed writings such as in written assignments. In addition, a barrage of undesired phone calls or emails (ie. harassment via technology) would fall in this category, too.

For immediate confrontational behavior (eg. arguing) that disrupts the normal operations of the college (instruction/student services), Penny and/or Chris Rolen would respond/intervene.

With this framework in mind, the following two cases were discussed. It was agreed that only initials and ID's would be used.

Student #1: YP 1461134 (below is not a transcript – just summary of comments made)

Penny: She doesn't like the answers that she gets from FA. She goes back repeatedly to demand answers. She barrages FA w/ emails. FA staff feels harassed by her. Emails sent to FA says: "READ ME" in all caps and large font. How do we manage online harassment?

Helen: Recommend saying, "This is the process. If you have more questions, please go to ... I am removing myself from this..." Ask the District IS to put a block on this person's emails. Inform the student that this has been or will be done. Say, "I can no longer assist you in this area."

Alicia: Send a consistent message w/ what you want them to do.

Dan: At SJSU, similar situation occurred. Decided that SJSU would provide basic level of services; if student needed more services, student would have to get service elsewhere or pay for the additional service. The line was drawn at what the services would be. Staff needs to recognize what would be acceptable as the line of service. If needed, the student would be referred on to the supervisor. Supervisor would send a letter to student.

Rosalyn: For the rare occasion that a student overuses or does not follow the program, the staff members refer the student to Rosalyn. I will meet with the student and then, put the directive in writing to the student. Parameters of service are explained.

Penny: This has been done with a few students already. Intervention Team met with the student. Written expectations were given to the student w/ the student signing the document to acknowledge. Sometimes, the staff just needs to say, "This is all that we can do for you."

Alicia: Some students do not realize they are harassing employees. To them, they are being assertive.

Rita: Some students think they are being assertive. To employees, they are bullying.

Chris: Employees need to give notice to students that they have to go elsewhere.

Rita: If we call the Police for some situations, this may be excessive. There is a grey area.

Bianka: Blocking the phone from accepting calls from students is a short-term solution.

Rita: This generation of students may **feel entitled**. They want to be served to the point of being over-served. They want more than what can be given.

Penny: Assertive training is helpful. Some who think they are assertive are actually now aggressive. Students need assistance to define "assertiveness."

Bianka: She taught assertiveness training in EOPS in past. Students need to be taught how to speak respectfully to others. Currently, some students are demanding, "Serve me no matter what or I'll speak to your manager!"

Chris: Set the parameters, if the student does not accept – tell them we can't help them anymore – that's it.

Penny: With the bad economy and budget cuts, there will be angry students not getting what they want. They will act very aggressive.

Rita: Their anger will be from loss of jobs or homes. Not getting what they want from the college will be the "straw on their backs."

Bianka: For some students, it's their aggressive personalities.

Penny: Gets calls from staff that they are overwhelmed. How can we help staff to address this? Let staff say, "I can no longer help you."

Rita: Some students will go over staff members' heads. Some "squeaky wheels" will get the attention. The work done by the original staff member does not get recognized.

Alicia: Most employees go out their way to help students. We may have to give permission to staff that they did all they can do and that there is a limit to what they can do.

Penny: Document the communications between staff members and students. Document that staff did all they could do.

Rita: Staff needs to feel that they are supported and they are doing what is right.

Bianka: Staff should know that they have the right to stop (bad) behavior. It is OK to say to student that they can't meet the student's demands.

Rita: In FA, the staff members may take turns at the front desk to limit burn-out.

Penny: The grey area is one (staff) can't say, "I'm having a bad day, so I won't see this student."
"Having a bad day can impact the workload."

Rita: Can we swap students? You take this one; I'll take this one.

Bianka: If I were a student, I would always have doubts about this employee's abilities or willingness to help.

Penny: Scheduling is a manager's issue – in some work settings, employees are given a time limitation to prevent being at the front desk nonstop.

Penny: Basically, staff needs help to draw the line. Staff can say, "I can't help you anymore" or "Based on your (escalating) reaction, I can't help you anymore." "If you continue to send me these (negative) emails, I will no longer answer your emails."

Chris: Police can be called when there are harassing emails. The person has to be notified that they will not accept harassing emails. Typical number is "10," then report to the Police. Again, it is important to document the communications from the harasser: emails, phone calls, in-person contact, etc.

Dan: This understanding needs to be given to all employees through Staff Development.

Rita: Flex Day would be good opportunity. Instead of a break-out, a panel discussion presented to all employees would be good.

Penny: The general session time is committed to other issues. Certain that this topic would not be considered for the general session. This topic is ongoing. Staff Development is proactive. They will include this topic at each Flex Day (as a breakout)

Helen: Are there online modules for this topic – like Sexual Harassment or Suicide Prevention?

Student #2 GR 1739298

Penny: This is Mary Ashley's student – she wants to major in Child Development.

Rita: This is a lady in her late 40's or early 50's; she has a nice personality, but she does not recognize the boundaries. At Registration, she went to the front of the line, cutting in front of a very long line. It is possible that she may have short-term memory issues. She asks the same question over and over again. She does not harass, but she is annoying and disruptive. I recommended she go to Counseling or DISC. She may need help with learning and retention issues.

Bianka: DISC can give more test-taking time to her; she may need a placement test.

Penny: She was found in the Child Development Center, cleaning herself (private area) with her pants down.

Bianka: Sounds like this student may not be in touch w/ reality.

Rita: She is not a physical threat. She just does not belong at Mission.

Penny: CDC is documenting her behavior.

Chris: This student falls in the grey area. She is not a danger to others.

Alicia: This person is a non-student now. She will start classes in the Fall.

Bianka: This person exhausted the Welcome Center staff. Welcome Center did not know that Incident Report forms existed.

Helen: Finger-printing is required of students who begin CHD practicum. Background checks are done then.

Penny: This person got aggressive at the Welcome Center. Incident reports need to be written. If this person cannot function as a student, intervention will be needed. If she violates the Student Code of Conduct, this is when she jumps the line. We will have to wait and see. Let's see if she follows-up and actually starts her classes in the Fall.

Rita: Actually, she may have been dis-enrolled since she did not pay her fees.

2. Threat Assessment Form (model from Grossmont)

We (Mission) are the Response Team (Student Health, Counseling, DISC, Financial Aid, etc.).
Assessment Team (for immediate threat) consist of Penny, Chris and Dan.

Rita: There are life-long students who use services beyond their fair share. There should be policies in place to limit the # units taken. How can we curb/redirect students elsewhere?

Penny: This discussion is happening at the State level. There is another student, C.L.M., who returned to Mission after several lawsuits against the District and has been restrained from attending at some other local colleges.

Penny: This student is harassing Penny; sends 5 emails to Penny/each day. Others have reported that she has used vulgar language, but she denies this.

Penny: WVC was able to get a restraining order to prevent her from taking classes at WVC. She is allowed to take classes at MC. However, she can't enroll without seeing Penny first. She managed to join MESA and is now harassing Char.

3. Incident Reports

Bianka says that Carmen is working on the Guidebook revisions. Bianka will make sure that the Incident Report is included. Bianka will contact Ken Oda to include the Incident Report in Counseling and Health Services websites, including the Inside Mission. Bianka will update the Committee List for the Guidebook (Rita will be included).

4. Planning for 2011/12

GAP Committee List form accepted by GAP. MHW Committee reports to SSC. President Jones had sent an email to Penny re: vision for MHW Committee. Bianka suggested that the college president be invited to a future MHW meeting. Dan explained that the college president is spending much time connecting with the greater community to garner resources. It would be up to Penny, as VP, to gain more clarity re: direction of the MHW Committee from the president (operational level) and report back to the Committee.

Licensed counselors – several of the ACSW's (associates) will take their license exams this year.

5. Flex Day – Fall Semester

Format will be similar to last year; same panel of presenters (Priscilla, Penny, Bianka and Alicia). Rosalyn said that Penny had mentioned she would include the MHW on the Flex Day Break-out list.

6. The MHW Committee highlights should be reported at the SSC meetings (Dan, Helen, Rosalyn).

7. Fall meetings – will have to be 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 12:30 – 2 pm. Dan and Rosalyn attend the Facility/Safety meetings – they meet on 2nd and 4th Thursdays, same time.

Notes by: Rosalyn