

Student Learning Achieved in Outreach Programming

Do students who participate in UCS outreach programming demonstrate knowledge of self-care strategies related to self-management, decision-making or problem solving?

Methodology

- A purposeful sample of students were identified who attended 4 structured outreach presentations between January and May 2017.
- An internally-created pen and paper survey was used to collect data for this project that consisted of three brief questions: a multiple-answer learning quiz, a Likert scale rating and a brief subjective narrative.
- Student participants were given the survey immediately following the outreach presentation.
- A combination of descriptive statistics and thematic coding was used to analyze the survey data.

Key Findings

- Of the 37 participants, 36 (97%) demonstrated acceptable performance by selecting at least 1 of 2 correct coping skills among 6 options listed on the first survey question.
- 34 out of the 37 participants (92%) exceeded the acceptable performance standard, and selected both of the correct coping strategies among 6 options listed.
- While a weak, positive correlation between students' self-reported level of learning after the workshop and the number of correct responses on their learning quiz was found, the correlation was not statistically significant.
- Thematic coding of the third survey question revealed four main themes within students' perceptions of the primary focus of the outreach presentation: coping strategies or ways to manage stress, UCS resources, how to talk about counseling and mental health with others, and when to refer others to UCS.

Learning Outcome

- Students who participate in counseling or programming through UCS will learn one or more strategies related to self-management, decision-making or problem solving in order to reduce stress.

Demographics

- Of the 39 students who attended structured outreach presentations, 37 students (95%) completed the survey following the presentation.
- All participants were currently enrolled undergraduate or graduate students at DePaul University.
- Specific demographic information about students was not obtained; however, the student groups or organizations served by these presentations consisted of both traditionally and non-traditionally aged students, as well as students from various underrepresented backgrounds (e.g., low income, students of color, first generation).

Plan of Action

- Emphasize the 'real-life' (i.e., behavioral, skills-based) use of self-care strategies in outreach presentations.
- Begin administering outreach evaluations at the completion of every outreach presentation or workshop that is not a tabling event.
- Update the department's program-level learning outcomes for outreach programming to increase clarity and accurately represent the range of outreach programming facilitated by the department.
- Develop and consistently use a documentation or record keeping system of all outreach activities provided on campus.

“...we are all human and that we shouldn't allow stress to paralyze us. In fact, there are various ways to manage stress, such as: deep breathing, visiting the counseling center, and practicing mindfulness.”