

SUPPORTING GRADUATE STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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Student Wellbeing at UBC

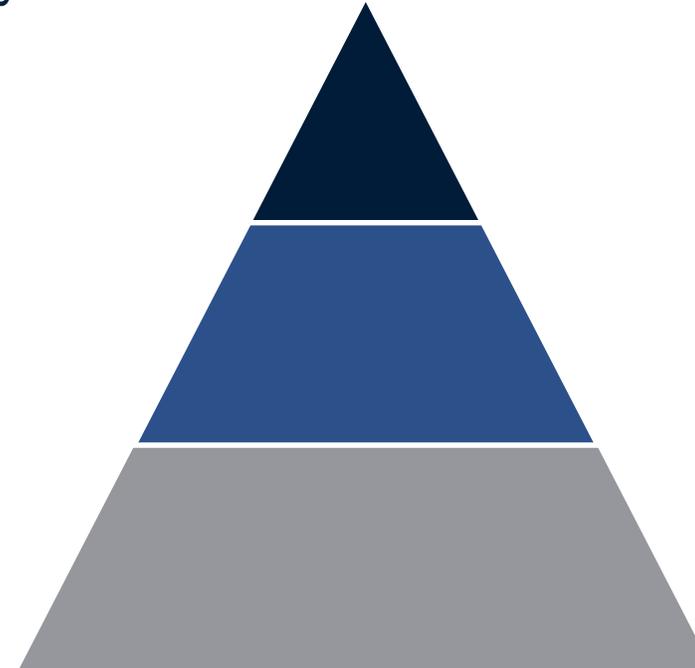


2013 – Student Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy

2015 – co-hosted international conference (with UNESCO, others) → *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges*

2016 – adopted Charter; committed \$1M; created *UBC Wellbeing* unit

2017 – Graduate Student Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy



Effective mental health services

Early identification of problems

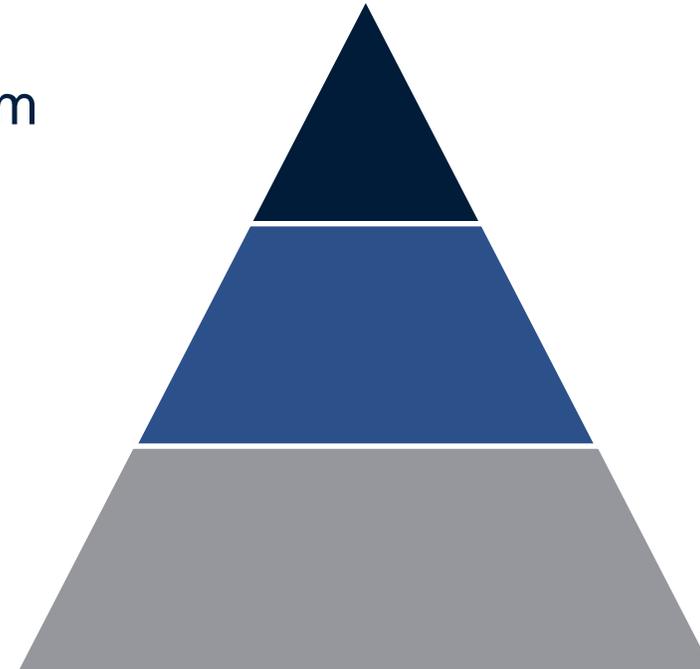
Supportive environment, awareness, self-management

Student Wellbeing at UBC



A few initiatives:

- Expanded, improved, mental health services
- Created centralized Early Alert enterprise system
- Reviewed, embedded wellbeing principles in policies, curriculum, orientation, onboarding
- Increased mental health 'literacy' (for all), promoted self-management, development, resources
- Created student-centric spaces
- Promoted healthy food, fitness; enhanced athletic facilities



Effective mental health services

Early identification of problems

Supportive environment, awareness, self-management

wellbeing.ubc.ca

Graduate Student Wellbeing

student-oriented

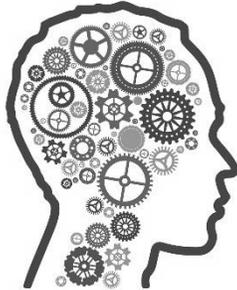


Pre-existing conditions



Predispositions

Academic abilities



Coping abilities

Personal circumstances



Identity

- Ensure effective, tailored mental health services, promote awareness, destigmatize (among students and faculty/staff)
 - e.g. alternative counselling venues, staff/faculty ‘first-aid’ courses
- Enhance self-managed mental health and awareness
 - e.g. workshops (imposter syndrome, procrastination)
- Enhance academic abilities (and/or make right admissions decisions)
 - e.g. academic English, statistics
- Provide accommodations, assistance as possible, needed
 - e.g. parental leave, FT-reduced workload
- Encourage development/fulfillment of identity(ies)
 - e.g. IDPs, counselling, student-centric educational practices (incl. *Reimagining the PhD*)

Graduate Student Wellbeing

environment-oriented



Grad School Environment

- Finances
- Academics
- Reliance on single mentor
- Isolation
- Unsupportive environment
- Hard work, long hours
- Ramifications for family/social life
- Unpredictability, challenge in research
- Big/risky investment in life (esp. international)
- Uncertainty in career
- ? Meaningfulness

Mitigating strategies (& on their own merit)

- Increased funding, min. stipend policy
- Academic support (e.g. ESL, writing)
- Enhance supervision, expand mentors
- Enhance community opportunities
- Prevent/address issues
- Expectations agreements
- Community groups, accommodations
- Self-care, realistic expectations, support
- Career support; graceful ways out (e.g. PhD to master's)
- Career support, reimagining PhD
- Reimagining PhD, career support, IDPs, community

Graduate Student Wellbeing *environment-oriented*



Grad programs



Grad Studies

[UBC Wellbeing](#)



UBC Health
Promotion &
Education

- Offer/arrange workshops, resources
- Facilitate conversation and strategizing to improve wellbeing

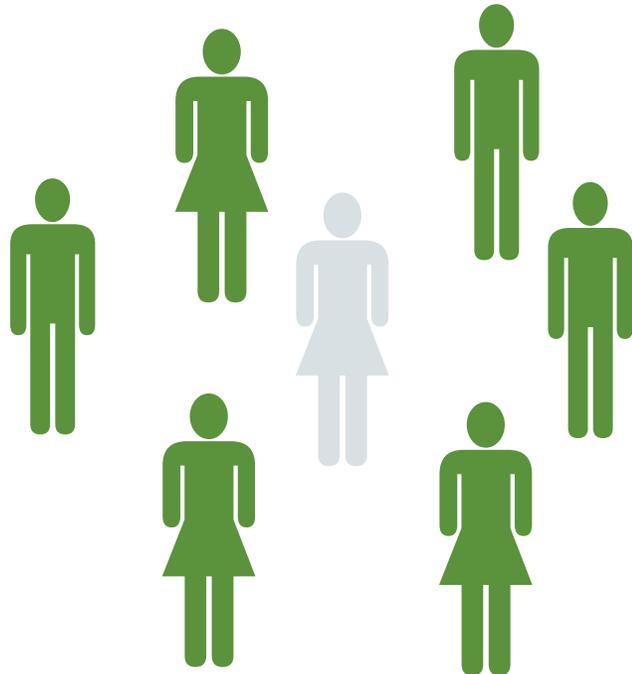
Graduate Student Wellbeing

environment/student-oriented



Identity

- students in transitional spaces often with conflicting (or non-existent) signals, supports



Now I'm just overeducated and underexperienced and what am I meant to do with that?

I often feel like I am on an island

I felt misled by the university with regards to the dysfunctional culture of higher education

My current research is not going to help me to get a job in the fields I am interested in.

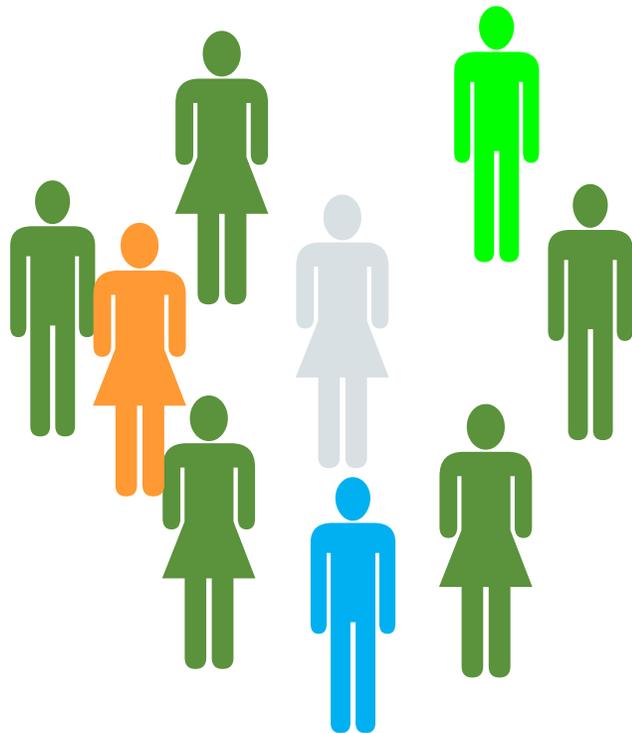
Graduate Student Wellbeing



Identity

Reimagining the PhD / Public Scholars Initiative

- Supports student-driven collaborative dissertation research with external (or alternative academic) partners; broadened scholarly approaches, including knowledge mobilization; broadened dissertation content/format – towards the public good



It allowed me to imagine possible career paths

It helped to authenticate my research identity as one which focuses on public engagement and good

It legitimized my pursuit of a career outside of the academic trajectory

It provided a sense of backing and seriousness. I became something more than just a student.

I feel more strongly about this project than any other I have worked on in my dissertation

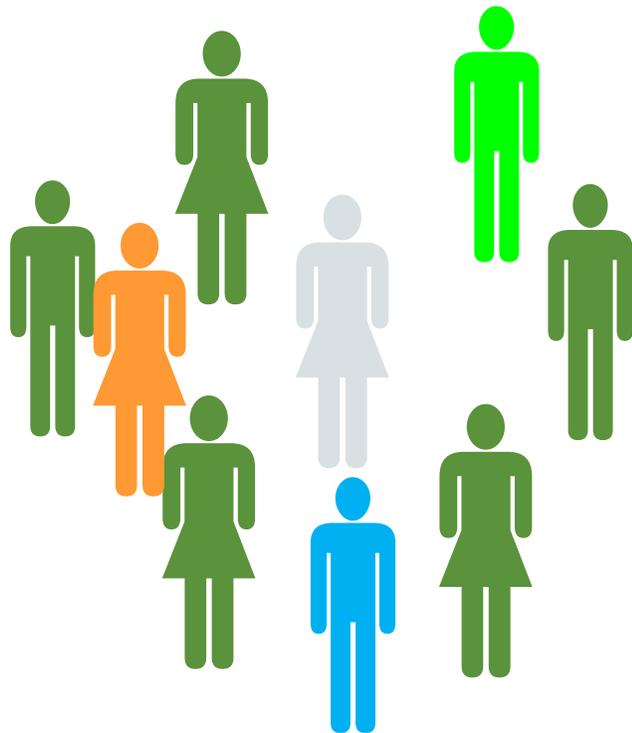
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Graduate Student Wellbeing



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Social Sciences

On the promotion of human flourishing

[Tyler J. VanderWeele](#)^{a,b,1}

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ABSTRACT

Go to:

Many empirical studies throughout the social and biomedical sciences focus only on very narrow outcomes such as income, or a single specific disease state, or a measure of positive affect. Human well-being or flourishing, however, consists in a much broader range of states and outcomes, certainly including mental and physical health, but also encompassing happiness and life satisfaction, meaning and purpose, character and virtue, and close social relationships. The empirical literature from longitudinal, experimental, and quasiexperimental studies is reviewed in attempt to identify major determinants of human flourishing, broadly conceived. Measures of human flourishing are proposed. Discussion is given to the implications of a broader conception of human flourishing, and of the research reviewed, for policy, and for future research in the biomedical and social sciences.

The state of **[institutions]** and the policies they undertake will **influence individual flourishing**. However, individual health, relationships, life satisfaction, purpose, and...virtue will also **contribute to the strengthening of the institutions that allow a society to thrive**.



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