Graduate Student Mental Health and Well-being: **Evidence-Informed Recommendations** for the Graduate Community



A Virtual Report Release April 29, 2021, 2:00-3:15 p.m. Eastern

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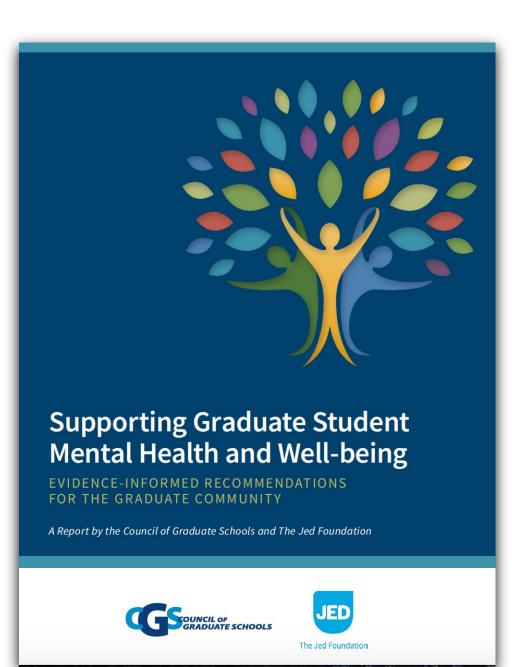
#GradStudentMentalHealth



Before we get started...

- Please note this event is being recorded.
- Questions can be submitted at any time via the GoToWebinar Q&A Panel.
- Access to the webinar recording and slides will be made available in the coming days.





Project Goal:

To create an evidence base to inform policies, programs, and resources on graduate student mental health and well-being.

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Five Key Takeaways

- As early as 2018 nearly two-thirds of graduate deans reported graduate students were struggling more with mental health challenges than 5 years earlier.
- One-third of graduate students report symptoms consistent with PTSD anxiety or depression. Anti-blackness, COVID related disruptions, and career uncertainty are all factors.
- Stressors are unevenly distributed across race, ethnicity, gender, and identity. BUT, also across stages of graduate student life cycle.
- While nearly 60% of graduate deans report that their university has a framework for promoting the mental health and well-being of graduate students, less than half of those report the availability of resources specific to the needs of students from marginalized racial, ethnic, or identity groups.
- Graduate Deans and Mentors have a key role to play in supporting graduate students. However, all key stakeholders have a stake and role in creating healthier program and university environments.





Vision: A graduate education system that supports the academic success and wellbeing of all students.







Values: We believe in...



- Student-centered education
- Educational environments that support the whole student
- Diversity, equity, inclusion
- Transparency





Principles:



- Wellbeing is a foundation of student success
- Thriving, not surviving is the goal
- The challenges experienced by graduate students vary widely and differ in important way from the experiences of undergraduates
- Faculty, staff, and administrators who with graduate student may also themselves experience significant stress





The Broader Call to Action: Presidents and Provosts

- Presidents, Provosts, and others set the tone for the university. They can and should:
 - Ensure campus mental health plans address graduate student needs
 - Prioritize diversity equity and inclusion
 - Explore ways to alter/mitigate the effects of hyper-competition







The Broader Call to Action: Graduate Deans

- Graduate Deans provide leadership in university wide policy discussions impacting graduate students, faculty, and programs. They can and should:
 - Consider becoming a signatory to the framework document
 - Review all long-standing policies that might adversely affect graduate student mental health and success
 - Serve as advocates for the graduate student voice on campus-wide initiatives and task forces





The Broader Call to Action: Graduate Program Directors and Department Chairs

- Graduate Program Directors and Department Chairs are situated to understand and lead change based in disciplinary culture and program requirements. They can and should:
 - Develop mechanisms for recognizing and rewarding high quality mentoring
 - Ensure program expectations, resources and processes are transparent
 - Identify stress points associated with program milestones and develop mechanisms to support students at points of transition

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The Broader Call to Action: Graduate Faculty and Supervisors

- Graduate Faculty and Supervisors are the major touchstone in a student's academic progress. They can and should:
 - Model work/life balance and be clear about expectations for students' academic performance and well being
 - Recognize and support students' diverse career goals
 - Express concern for those who may be struggling







The Broader Call to Action: Graduate Students

- Graduate Students have a role to play in helping faculty and administrators understand and address unnecessary stressors and in supporting their peers and the undergraduate students they teach. They can and should:
 - Connect fellow graduate students and the undergraduate students they teach to the professionals and resources that can support them in periods of distress

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Embody principles of self-care and compassionate mentoring



The Broader Call to Action: Funding Agencies

- Funding Agencies can provide additional incentives for university and systems change. They can and should:
 - Analyze how current grant review practices exacerbate hypercompetitiveness and faculty, postdoc, and graduate student stress
 - Support research to better understand graduate student health and well-being particularly for those sub-groups about whom little is currently known





Welcome to our Panelists and Members of the Project Advisory Board







Michael Cunningham Associate Provost of Graduate Education and Research Tulane University

Tammi Vacha-Haase Dean of the Graduate College Boise State University





Susanna Harris CEO Founder PhD Balance

Barry Schreier Director University Counseling Center The University of Iowa

Panel discussion facilitated by



Nance Roy Chief Clinical Officer The Jed Foundation



 Please submit your question in the GoToWebinar Q&A Panel.

 We are also happy to answer questions by email after the webinar. Please email Enyu Zhou at ezhou@cgs.nche.edu. Join our Campaign to Support Graduate Student Mental Health and Well-being

Look in the Chat for a link to materials you can adapt and share.





Sample blurbs for your newsletter or website

Sample social media posts



Press release template for signatory universities



Infographics

Thank you for participating!

We look forward to sharing the webinar slides and recording.



www.cgsnet.org

www.jedfoundation.org





