

TO: Jeffrey J. Bethke, Executive Vice President
DePaul Office of Public Safety
DePaul Event Staff
FROM: Emily Judd
DATE: October 22, 2018
SUBJECT: Health and Wellness Initiative for 2019

DePaul's five-year program, Grounded in Mission, has worked to outline major objectives to improve undergraduate students' first-year academic success, as well as retention, progress, and timely degree completion. Promoting student health and wellness through improved communication and accessible evidence-based services and programs was discussed in detail, as we believe this to be a key component in a valuable and successful DePaul experience. I am writing you today to discuss expanding some of our health and wellness initiatives in 2019 as more information has become available on the rising number of students developing anxiety or depression related problems as well as safety concerns.

Health and wellness is becoming an area of increased importance due to new reports showing the number of undergraduate students with anxiety and/or depression is at an all time high. In a recent survey we sent out to 250 first-year students in the College of Communication, 164 reported feeling "out of control" and "overwhelmed" at some point during the school year. In order to improve first-year success rates, retention, and progress, combating this problem and providing students the help they need is of utmost importance.

Additionally, through our research, it has become evident that safety in the city of Chicago, and subsequently DePaul, is the number one reason for non-returning students. Unfortunately, crime is an inevitable struggle in the city, but it is imperative we take action to ensure our students are educated and equipped to handle certain situations that may arise. We will only achieve our desired objectives if our students feel safe attending classes at both the Lincoln Park and Loop campus.

After reviewing our research, I am proposing we create and implement an event, the Health and Wellness Fair, to be held each year before school starts (roughly the last week in August) for incoming and returning students. This event could be held in the McGraff Auditorium with various booths set up tackling different issues in unique ways. Based on our findings, it is crucial we tackle public safety, sexual assault, managing stress, and dealing with/acquiring help for anxiety and depression related issues.

Here is an initial list of ideas to be included in said event:

- Quick fire counseling with Psychology students (informal chats).
- An educational booth on where and how to find more professional help for anxiety and depression issues.
- A Second City x DePaul Theater School performance tackling issues such as:
 - Public safety
 - Sexual assault
 - Political issues

- A self-defense class with a booth providing information on additional classes, how to stay safe, and how to operate pepper spray.
- Giveaways.
 - E.g. Stress balls with contact information of our DePaul counselors.

We have always yielded a great response from our incoming students at pre school year events. This can easily be tacked on to our existing event budget because there will be limited outside hires; most booths will be run by DePaul's own students and staff. Finally, it will tackle these issues early and head on, providing students education and knowledge on outlets available to help.

Please reply with comments and questions by Nov 1. If we want to implement this event for our 2019 incoming students, we will need to act before the end of the year.

Thank you.