

Student Senate

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STUDENT SENATE BILL 2022-1042

TITLE: Resolution Recognizing the Disability and Mental Health Resource Crisis at the University of Florida

AUTHOR(S): Senator Connor Panish, Deputy Minority Leader Gabriela Montes, Senator Mikhail Mikhaylov

SPONSOR(S): Student Body Treasurer Sierra Kantemneni, Senate President Elizabeth Hartzog, Senate President Pro-Tempore Olivia Green, Rules and Ethics Chairwoman Tanner Thompson, Budget and Appropriations Chairwoman Catherine Giordano, Information and Communications Chairwoman Phoebe Funai, Judiciary Chairman John Brinkman, Majority Party Leader Emily Pecora, Minority Party Leader Faith Corbett, Senator Daniel DiBari, Senator Shelby Schultz, Senator Julia Haley, Senator Ryan Athay, Senator Raisa Jafry, Senator Ashley Shakib, Senator Mason Solomon, Senator Bradley Thomas, Senator Bronson Allemand, Senator Saketh Damera, Senator Bianca Barrios, Senator Nyla Pierre, Senator Cole Hautamaki, Senator Charlize Ramos, Senator Blake Cox, Senator Sidney Ruedas, Senator Justin Lanzuela, Senator Liam Antonszewski, Senator Alejandro Hoys Montoya, Senator Aleah Henley, Senator Amanda Lieber, Senator Katie Berger, Senator Sean Harkins, Senator Ana Carolina Troncoso, Senator Frederic Gaines, Senator Samantha Sparks, Senator Ethan Ghozali, Senator Timothy Shin, Senator Savannah James, Senator Annalee Watts, Senator Aneesh Chatrathi, Senator Owen Lekebusch, Senator Hana Ali, Senator Savannah Partridge, Senator Cassie Urbenz, Senator Grace Shoemaker, Senator Oscar Santiago, Senator Mara Vaknin, Senator Johnny Liu, Senator Haley Rubin, Senator Paola Toro, Senator Garrett Josephson

WHEREAS, on May 31st, 2022, President Joe Biden released a statement addressing the growing national concern regarding the “Mental Health Crisis”; and, [1]

WHEREAS, according to the Healthy Minds Study, approximately 41% of all students reported having “depression overall” with another 34% reporting positive screenings for anxiety; and, [2]

WHEREAS, within the same study, only 30% of all college student ever received mental health therapy/counseling; and, [2]

WHEREAS, the CDC reports that “... adults with disabilities report experiencing frequent mental distress almost 5 times as often as adults without disabilities...” [3]

WHEREAS, at the University of Florida, the division of Student Life houses both the Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) and the Disability Resource Center (DRC) ; and, [4]

WHEREAS, the number of students who received a service from the CWC in the 2021-2022 fiscal year was 5367, up from 4822 in the 2020-2021 fiscal year; and, [5][6]

WHEREAS, the current ratio of appointments to case managers at the CWC is 1:1789; and, [5]

WHEREAS, of all students who receive accommodations from the DRC, 40% receive them as a result of mental health issues; and, [9]

WHEREAS, the number of people registered with the DRC recently surpassed 6000 students, up from 5072 in the 2021-22 fiscal year; and, [10]

WHEREAS, the DRC currently only has 6 full time learning specialists, making the currently ratio of learning specialists to students 1:1000; and, [9]

WHEREAS, the number of students at the University of Florida increases every year, meaning the ratios between CWC and DRC staff to registered students will continue to diverge; and, [11]

WHEREAS, Student Senate Bills 2022-1008 and 2022-1032 have established the Student Senate's sentiment in favor of the "expansion of the resources provided by the CWC" along with "the expansion of like mental health services," respectively; and, [7][8]

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes that access to accommodations and mental health resources are vital to student success.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate acknowledges that current resources are not sufficiently supported and therefore cannot meet the needs of the Student Body.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the urgent need for further aid to the resources available at the University of Florida, and will support any efforts that ensure that all students have access to the accommodations and/or the mental support they need.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to University of Florida President Dr. W. Kent Fuchs, Provost Dr. Joseph Glover, Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs Dr. Angela Linder, Vice President for Student Life Dr. Heather White, Gator Well Director Dr. Monica Webb, Counseling & Wellness Center Director Ernesto Escoto, Campus Assistance and Resources for Empowerment (CARE) Assistant Dean and Director Nadene Reynolds, Disability Resource Center Director Jenna Gonzalez

[1] <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/31/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-highlights-strategy-to-address-the-national-mental-health-crisis/#:~:text=As%20we%20mark%20Mental%20Health,their%20children's%20mental%20wel%20I%20being.>

- [2] https://healthymindsnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/HMS_nationalwinter2021_update1.5.21.pdf
- [3] <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/features/mental-health-for-all.html>
- [4] <https://studentlife.ufl.edu/departments/>
- [5] <https://issuu.com/ufcwc/docs/ufcwc-annualreport-21-22>
- [6] <https://issuu.com/cwcannualreport/docs/cwc-annualreport-2020-21>
- [7] <https://sg.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/2022-1032-Resolution-Recognizing-the-988-Suicide-Crisis-Lifeline-as-a-Critical-Campus-Mental-Health-Resource-V2.pdf>
- [8] https://sg.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Student-Senate-Bill-2022-1008-Resolution_Recognizing-May-as-Mental-Health-Awareness-Month-2022.pdf
- [9] Disability Resource Center. Meeting with Senator Connor Panish. 23 March 2022.
- [10] Disability Resource Center Director Jenna Gonzalez. Email Correspondence with Senator Connor Panish. 19 September 2022.
- [11] <https://ir.aa.ufl.edu/facts/enrollment>



Olivia Green
Senate President

10/17/2022
Date