

**STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1235**

**TITLE: Behavioral Awareness & Legislative Advocacy for Necessary Clinical Education (BALANCE) VOLUME II: OCD & ADHD**

**AUTHOR(S): Senator Hunter Monson**

**SPONSOR(S): Senate President John Brinkman, Senate President Pro-Tempore Saketh Damera, Member-at-Large Maya Idiculla, Member-at-Large Laurel Wentworth, Majority Party Leader Julia Seifer, Deputy Minority Party Leader Anamika Naidu, Senator Arturo Zárrate, Judiciary Vice-Chairman Aaron Rubaii**

**WHEREAS**, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) & obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) are two very different attentiveness-related disorders; however they both are extraordinarily prevalent among university students & sometimes may lead to heightened levels of anxiety & depression [1][2][3]; and

**WHEREAS**, ADHD is a condition that most often is found during childhood; however, it is “relatively common in adults, with prevalence rates reaching 5% in the general population,” & “the comorbid presentation of people suffering with ADHD & Bipolar Disorder (BD) is associated with a more severe disease course, more severe mood disorder symptoms, & lower functional scores” [4][15]; and,

**WHEREAS**, ADHD is the most prevalent & common childhood neurodevelopmental disorder & is a growing health crisis in the United States [4][15][18]; and,

**WHEREAS**, ADHD is characterized by long-lasting negative consequence of increased risks for substance abuse, addiction, anti-social behavior, lower academic attainment [15][18]; and,  
**WHEREAS**, despite the general misconception of them being mutually exclusive, “OCD & ADHD are frequent psychiatric disorders which are highly comorbid with each other & with other psychiatric symptomatology” [4]; and,

**WHEREAS**, studies have found that “comorbid OCD & ADHD enhance the symptoms of each other, though the presence of OCD may attenuate hyperactivity in some ADHD patients,” & “most research has studied the prevalence of ADHD in patients with OCD rather than the inverse, with diagnosis rates mostly falling around 30 percent” [8][9]; and,

**WHEREAS**, “approximately 80% of adults diagnosed with ADHD also present with a psychiatric comorbidity at least once in their lifetime & common comorbidities include major depressive disorder, anxiety disorders, substance use disorders, and personality disorders” [10][11][12]; and,

**WHEREAS**, it was found that “among those with less severe ADHD symptoms, higher cardiorespiratory fitness (CRF) was associated with less depression, anxiety, and perceived stress,” but those with severe ADHD symptoms tend to struggle with maintaining routines &/or schedules [13][14]; and,

**WHEREAS**, studies found that “serotonin-related genes have some common gene associated with OCD & ADHD” & “dopamine-related genes are much more associated with ADHD than with OCD” [5]; and,

**WHEREAS**, the UF OCD program “is the leading clinical program for the evaluation and treatment in the southeastern United States” & offers Complete Diagnostic Assessments, Medication Management, & Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) [6]; and,

**WHEREAS**, obsessions are defined by the UF Psychiatry Department as “unwelcome & distressing ideas, thoughts, images or impulses that repeatedly enter your mind, may seem to occur against your will, may be repugnant to you, you may recognize them as senseless, & they may not fit your personality or value system”[6]; and,

**WHEREAS**, compulsions are defined by the UF Psychiatry Department as “behaviors or acts that you feel driven to perform although you may recognize them as senseless or excessive, & at times, you may try to resist doing them but this may prove difficult, & may experience anxiety that does not diminish until the behavior is completed” [6]; and,

**WHEREAS**, some common obsessions include “contamination (e.g., fear of dirt germs, or illness), safety/harm (e.g., being responsible for a fire), unwanted acts of aggression (e.g., unwanted impulse to harm a loved one), unacceptable sexual or religious thoughts (e.g., sacrilegious images of Christ), & the need for symmetry or exactness” [6]; and,

**WHEREAS**, some common compulsions include “excessive cleaning (e.g., ritualized hand washing), checking, ordering and arranging rituals, counting, repeating routine activities (e.g., going in/out of a doorway), hoarding (e.g., collecting useless items), & unobservable mental rituals (e.g., silent recitation of nonsense words to vanquish a horrific image)” [6]; and,

**WHEREAS**, the FLOAAT Center offers Professional Mental Health Services in Gainesville, & its specialty treatments include Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), ADHD, Anxiety Disorders, Depression, Hair Pulling Disorder, Hoarding Disorder, OCD & Related Disorders, Tic Disorder & Tourette’s Syndrome, & Trauma [7]; and,

**WHEREAS**, the treatment & diagnosis of ADHD & OCD are very important, but the racial & ethnic disparities present are at the foundation of the issues present within the current medical & healthcare system in the United States; and,

**WHEREAS**, a study found that “minority children were less likely than white children to receive an ADHD diagnosis,” & “the odds of ADHD diagnosis for African Americans,

Hispanics, & children of other races/ethnicities were 69% lower, respectively, than for whites [16]; and,

**WHEREAS**, it was further found that “racial/ethnic disparities in ADHD diagnosis occur by kindergarten and continue until at least the end of eighth grade” [16]; and,

**WHEREAS**, studies have found that “university students have experienced an increase in obsessive-compulsive symptoms and have increasingly sought treatment” [17]; and,

**WHEREAS**, with a trend of significant increase in ADHD diagnoses over the last 20 years, there have been both significant findings & treatment evaluations on what best works to alleviate symptoms & effectively provide the care for those who need it; and,

**WHEREAS**, it has been found that “it is estimated that 10.5 million American adults are living with ADHD,” & it is reported that “the diagnosis of ADHD in adults is now four times that of children with its prevalence more than doubling between 2007 and 2016 [18]; and,

**WHEREAS**, reports have found that 9.3% of children have ADHD, 4.4% of American adults have ADHD, ADHD is more common among boys at 12.7% & adult men at 5.4% than girls at 5.6% & adult women at 3.2%, children with longer screen times have a higher ADHD risk of 10.5%, 64% of children with ADHD also have at least one mental health problem, only 3 in 4 American children receive ADHD treatment, 80% of adults with ADHD also suffer from at least one mental health problem, only 10.9% of adults with ADHD receive some form of ADHD treatment, & untreated ADHD increases substance use disorder risk by 100% in teens & 58% among adults [19]; and,

**WHEREAS**, with OCD affecting over 2 million individuals in the United States, the UF Health Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Program makes it a priority to offer effective services that have been shown to reduce symptoms by at least 50 percent & demonstrate that 85 percent of patients experience positive results from treatment [20]; and,

**WHEREAS**, with UF Healthcare playing such an integral part in the treatment & diagnosis both in Gainesville & throughout the southeast United States, it is of the utmost importance to provide equitable care to all who need it & is also essential to continue promoting awareness regarding the continually rising issues that those who suffer from ADHD &/or OCD may experience; then,

**THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate acknowledges the impact of ADHD & OCD on mental health & overall productivity; and,

**THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate advocates for the establishment of OCD Awareness Week during October 10-16th at the University of Florida; and,

**THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes that ADHD Awareness Month is throughout the month of October & calls

upon the University of Florida to greater promote the issues that those suffering from ADHD experience; and,

**THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the racial & ethnic disparities existing within the healthcare system further stagnate the present issues regarding the diagnosis & treatment of OCD &/or ADHD; and,

**THEREFORE LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate understands that the comorbidity of ADHD & OCD together & other possible links to additional mental illnesses significantly impact the mental health & functioning of those that suffer from either &/or both disorders; and,

**THEREFORE LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED** that the University of Florida Student Senate supports equitable care to all students & individuals who suffer from ADHD &/or OCD.

*Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to the University of Florida President Ben Sasse, University of Florida Provost J. Scott Angle, Vice President for Student Life Heather White, University of Florida Student Body President Olivia Green, University of Florida Student Body Vice President Clara Calavia, University of Florida Counseling & Wellness Center Executive Director Ernesto Escoto, University of Florida Counseling & Wellness Center Interim Director Rosa West, University of Florida Counseling & Wellness Center Associate Directors Jennifer Stuart, Natasha Maynard-Pemba, & Alvin Lawrence, University of Florida Counseling & Wellness Center Associate Director (Administrative Services) Marie Southern, University of Florida Counseling & Wellness Center Associate Director of Crisis & Emergency Services & Consultation & Referral Team Coordinator Olivia K. Pitkethly, University of Florida Counseling & Wellness Center Faculty Council Chair Ginamarie Russo, Board of Trustees Chair Mori Hosseini, & Director of Campus Engagement & Interim Assistant Vice President for Student Life James Tyger.*

[1] <https://capmh.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13034-018-0218-3>

[2] <https://pulsetms.com/blog/a-rise-in-ocd-diagnoses-for-college-students-what-you-need-to-know/#:~:text=2.8%25%20of%20cis%20gender%20college,with%20OCD%20at%20some%20p oint.>

[3] <https://www.webmd.com/add-adhd/anxiety-adhd-link>

[4] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4148591/>

[5] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4148591/table/Tab2/>

[6] <https://psychiatry.ufl.edu/patient-care-services/ocd-program/>

[7] <https://www.floaatcenter.com/>

[8] <https://www.additudemag.com/ocd-adhd-comorbid-symptoms-diagnosis-treatment/#:~:text=OCD%2DADHD%20Prevalence%20and%20Background,mostly%20falling%20around%2030%20percent.>

[9] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11800207/#:~:text=Conclusion%3A%20These%20findings%20suggest%20that,of%20OCD%20in%20comorbid%20youths.>

[10] [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10173354/#:~:text=Approximately%2080%25%20of%20adults%20diagnosed,et%20al.%2C%202017\).](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10173354/#:~:text=Approximately%2080%25%20of%20adults%20diagnosed,et%20al.%2C%202017).)

[11] <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0165032709003176>

[12] <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12888-017-1463-3>

[13] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6556068/>

[14]

[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10173354/#:~:text=Approximately%2080%25%20of%20adults%20diagnosed,et%20al.%2C%202017\).](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10173354/#:~:text=Approximately%2080%25%20of%20adults%20diagnosed,et%20al.%2C%202017).)

[15] <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0165032709003176>

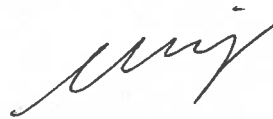
[16] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3691530/#:~:text=From%20kindergarten%20to%20eighth%20grade%2C%20children%20from%20each%20racial%2Fethnic,of%20being%20diagnosed%20with%20ADHD.>

[17] <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/college-wellness/202304/is-ocd-increasing-in-college-students-since-covid-19>

[18] <https://www.lifespan.org/lifespan-living/adhd-why-diagnosis-attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-rising#:~:text=It%20is%20estimated%20that%2010.5,96%20percent.>

[19] <https://cfah.org/adhd-statistics/>

[20] <https://ufhealth.org/locations/uf-health-psychology-springhill#:~:text=The%20UF%20Health%20Obsessive%2DCompulsive,pharmacological%20treatment%20coordinated%20as%20needed.>



3/21/24

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Monish Vijayaraghavan  
Senate President

Date