

## **UWC-USA Student Social and Emotional Wellness Monitoring Policy**

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## **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student social and emotional wellness is understood, promoted, and practiced as a vital part of the UWC-USA mission to make education a force for peace and a sustainable future. UWC-USA recognizes:

- UWC-USA students come from a variety of backgrounds and geographies with differing understandings and experiences of wellness, including mental wellness.
- The UWC experience is challenging academically, experientially and socially.
- Given the UWC-USA mission, values, and student profile, any attempt to promote wellness must be in partnership with students.
- As much as possible, in light of the diversity of our students, wellness will be presented in light of UWC values.

At UWC-USA, student social and emotional wellness is also referred to as personal sustainability, in mission alignment with community commitment to personal, community and environmental sustainability.

## **II. Scope**

This policy covers the two-year UWC-USA experience. It combines clinical approaches as well as healthy habit building through individual and community-sponsored programs and activities dedicated to student wellness. This policy emphasizes evidence-based approaches to develop and support personal sustainability and draws on research provided in the [Conceptual Framework for a Social-Emotional Wellness Program at UWC-USA](#), developed by consulting Psychologist Dr. Selena E. Sermeño.

All members of the UWC-USA community are responsible for helping students to develop personal sustainability as part of their UWC-USA journey. By monitoring throughout the two years, UWC-USA personnel will be able to celebrate thriving students and assess and intervene when students are struggling in ways that affect their wellness.

## **III. Definitions**

*Clinical Supervisor for Mental Health (CSMH)/Suicide Prevention Coordinator*

Main behavioral health liaison for Health Team.

*Health Team*

Includes Nurses, Clinical Supervisor for Mental Health, Dean of Student Life, Dean of Teaching and Learning, Director of Residential Life and Student Safety, and the Student Insurance Coordinator.

#### *Dean of Student Life*

Manages the overall student life experience by leading across residential life, student leadership, health and wellness, and restorative discipline.

#### *Director of Residential Life and Student Safety*

Coordinates the overall residential experience and services focused on student safety.

#### *Residential Coordinator (RC)*

Serves as the dorm parent and leads pastoral care.

#### *Student Advisor/s*

Serves as the lead education program coordinator for each student.

#### *Students of Concern*

Students identified through the admissions process, intake screenings, or clinical evaluation who require additional support.

#### *Trusted Adults*

Faculty members identified by a student as their nominated *trusted adults*.

### **IV. Two-year plan for monitoring student social and emotional well-being**

1. Pre-arrival wellness agreement signed by parent or guardian and student
2. Application and pre-arrival wellness agreement review by the Associate Head of School in consultation with the Director of Admissions, Dean of Student Life, and Dean of Teaching and Learning to assess potential challenges to a student's wellness at UWC-USA
3. Arrival behavioral health screenings conducted by UWC-USA counselors, Southwestern College Counseling, and New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute volunteers, utilizing evidence-based assessments (first in Fall 2024), including:
  - a. [Patient Health Questionnaire 9](#) (PHQ-9)
  - b. [Columbia-Suicide Severity Rating Scale](#) (C-SSRS)
  - c. [Harvard Flourishing Measure](#)
  - d. [Beck Anxiety Inventory](#)

4. For students flagged during screening, a coordinated care plan is created in collaboration between the counselor and the student. This plan is managed and monitored by the Clinical Supervisor for Mental Health and other Health Team members in collaboration with key student support personnel: the student's RC, Advisor and nominated trusted adults.
5. For all students,
  - a. Nurse query and assessment of altitude adjustment for medication upon arrival (Start of school and return from Winter Break).
  - b. Nurse query and assessment of altitude adjustment for any new medications during the two-year period.
  - c. Wellness plan developed with RC, twice annually, using a self-assessment tool to determine the areas of wellness (emotional, environmental, intellectual, occupational, physical, cultural, social, and spiritual) where the student is thriving, as well as those that may need greater attention.
  - d. Group support sessions through regional partnerships to address the diverse population of UWC-USA students, including Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Spirituality & Suicide Prevention, Self-care Skills, LGBTQAP+, and Disordered Eating.
  - e. Wellness activities coordinated by counselors in consultation with students, scheduled regularly throughout the year with the NM Medical Reserve Corps, including auricular acupuncture and therapy dogs as non-verbal supports.
  - f. Postings to raise wellness awareness in key locations.
  - g. Training of the Student Wellness Education and Empowerment Team (SWEET) by Health Team members; peer education and collaboration with residential staff related to health and wellness throughout the year.
  - h. Robust menu of physical activities and self/community care opportunities throughout the two-year experience as part of personal and communal sustainability programming.

## **V. Intervention**

When a student is identified by a peer, educator, or other source as struggling with wellness — i.e., verbalizes difficulties, presents overt risk factors such as agitation or intoxication, an act of self-harm occurs, or expresses or otherwise shows signs of suicidal ideation — the student shall be seen by the Clinical Supervisor for Mental Health, immediately, or other licensed mental health counselor if the CSMH is unavailable, and be added to the list of Students of Concern monitored by the Health Team. If there is no mental health professional available, and a concern about suicide has been raised, a designated staff member (e.g., school nurse or Dean of Student Life) shall address the situation in accordance with the [UWC-USA Suicide Prevention and Intervention Policy](#).

Wellness is a broad category and plans for support will vary. The Dean of Student Life will consult with the student and Health Team to determine when parents and national committees

need to be brought in for full support. Any updates to wellness plans will be flagged on the REACH student life management platform to inform the student's RC, Advisor, Trusted Adults, and Teachers. The Dean of Student Life will report to the Associate Head of School on a weekly basis regarding student wellness. The Associate Head of School will report to the President immediately any concerns regarding elevated concern, including but not limited to student suicidality.

For any medication prescription, the UWC-USA Medication Supervision and Administration Policy will prevail.

## **VI. Parent/Guardian and National Committee Engagement**

UWC-USA requires students to have a high level of independence in order to engage in the UWC program. However, when students are not thriving socially and emotionally, parents/guardians and national committees may be asked to partner with the school to support the student. The student will be part of the decision to include parents/guardians or national committees; however, the school retains the right to engage parents/guardians and national committees as it sees fit. For any situations involving suicidal ideation or medication administration, parent/guardian notification requirements in the [UWC-USA Suicide Prevention and Intervention Policy](#) and in the UWC-USA Medication Administration and Supervision Policy will prevail.

To ensure student wellness, honesty and transparency between families, students and employees is essential throughout the UWC-USA experience, from application through graduation. Students and parents/guardians are expected to communicate any information related to safety and wellness to the school, and to ask for help when needed. Failure to disclose a health or safety issue that affects wellness will be taken seriously and may result in a student returning home.