

2019-20
ANNUAL REPORT
OF
HEALTH COUNCIL

Presented at the
801st Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
January 28, 2021

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Jessika Antinori, Undergraduate
Tobias Baskin, Biology (Chair)
Ann Becker, University Health Services
Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson, Public Health
Mary Ellen Burke, Nursing
George Corey, University Health Services
Betsy Cracco, Student Affairs
Gaurav Dangol, Graduate Student
Katherine Dixon-Gordon, Psychology
Sarah Dupont, Graduate student
Erica Ferreira, Graduate Student
Danny Flaherty, Undergraduate
Linda Fortin, USA
Jessica Gavin, Undergraduate
Sarah Goff, Public Health
Jeffrey Hescock, Environmental Health & Safety
Jill Hughes, Faculty Senate Project Assistant
Kyle Kendall, Undergraduate
Joyce Libbin, Undergraduate
Ellen Lutz, Libraries
Bridget Mack, Undergraduate
MJ Peterson, Faculty Senate
Mike Pease, Center for Health Promotion
Roisin Quinn, Cooley Dickinson Hospital
Melissa Rotkiewicz, Counseling and Psychological Health
Lori Sadler, University Health Services
Suthaney Sundar, Undergraduate
David Morin, Graduate student
Wilmore Webley, Microbiology

In 2019 – 2020, with Tobias Baskin as chair, Health Council met 7 times. Additionally, in view of the pandemic, Council met informally three times during the summer. Council continues to have sustained involvement from undergraduate members, including representatives of the Student Wellness Advisory Board. Additionally, Council meetings were attended by a Cooley Dickinson staff member specializing in community relations.

During the academic year, Health Council discussed various issues related to campus health and safety, including:

- **Implementation, oversight, and enforcement of the campus tobacco policy**
- **Allergens in dormitories**
- **Pedestrian safety on campus**
- **The meaning of a doctor’s note in the context of absence from class**
- **Providing menstrual supplies in restrooms**
- **New initiatives for ensuring mental health**
- **Overall charge to the Council, as stated in the bylaws**
- **Graduate student housing**
- **COVID-19**

Throughout the year, Health Council discussed issues surrounding implementation of the Tobacco Free Campus policy. We heard from members of the committee for implementing the policy about new initiatives for improving communication and compliance. New signage is immanent.

Health Council reviewed and discussed “A Student’s Guide to University Health Services”, an informational booklet written and now distributed by the Student Wellness Advisory Board (SWAB).

Health Council discussed on several occasions issues related to prioritizing the construction of a building that would house services for both mental and physical health care. Health Council views current facilities for health care to be inadequate and limiting student success. We discussed strategies to present this case to campus leadership.

Health Council reviewed and discussed plans from Environmental Health & Safety to improve pedestrian safety on campus. These plans include signs showing the driver’s speed and raised crosswalks.

Health Council heard an impassioned proposal from an undergraduate student leader proposing that menstrual supplies be available at no cost in restrooms. Council believes that this is an equity issue as well as a health issue and is taking steps to help bring this policy to fruition.

Health Council discussed on several occasions “excuse notes” from health care providers. A provider can verify a student visited their practice but cannot excuse a student from class—that is the role of the instructor. For many illnesses self-care is appropriate and visits to the clinic just to get a note are contra-indicated. Policies and expectations around these notes are being revised.

And finally, at our last two meetings, Health Council discussed the response to COVID-19, ranging from classroom to dormitory. Given the wide representation among campus units on Health Council, this discussion was a helpful exchange of experiences and approaches.

For the coming year, Council will continue to focus on plans and responses to COVID-19. In addition, we will continue to oversee the Tobacco Free Campus policy and we will continue to advocate for providing free menstrual supplies in restrooms. As always, we urge everyone to state healthy and safe.

**Respectfully submitted,
Tobias Baskin**