



NMU Action Project Declaration

Title: Understanding and Addressing the Mental Health Needs of our Students

Systems Portfolio Category: 2 - Meeting Student and Other Key Stakeholder Needs

Planned Project Launch Date: November 1, 2016

Target Completion Date: November 1, 2017

Sponsor: Dr. Marie Aho, Director of NMU Counseling and Consultation Services

1. Briefly describe the project in less than 100 words. Be sure to identify the key organizational areas (departments, programs, divisions, units, etc.) and key organizational processes that this action project will affect, change, and/or improve.

NMU has identified student mental health as a priority for our community. The purpose of this Action Project is to improve our understanding of students' mental health needs, determine how we can improve our ability to respond to our students' needs in a targeted and focused manner, and identify long - term mental health solutions for our students.

This Action Project will be led by the Director of NMU Counseling and Consultation Services (CCS). Additional faculty from CCS will also participate. Other key contributors will include members of the President's Task Force on Mental Health and Well-Being.

2. Describe your institution's reasons for initiating this Action Project now and for how long it should take to complete it. Why are this project and its goals high among your current priorities? Also, explain how this project relates to any strategic initiatives or challenges described in the institution's recent or soon-to-be submitted portfolio.

Nationwide concerns regarding the state of student mental health on college and university campuses led to the president of NMU establishing the Task Force on Mental Health and Well-Being. Although the Task Force has been instrumental in providing mental health information to the NMU and Marquette communities, there is a current need to further assess the mental health experiences of our students. NMU has identified the University of Michigan's *Health Minds Survey* as our survey instrument of choice. The project duration is in alignment with the schedule put forth by Health Minds.

The White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault recently recommended that college and universities administer campus climate surveys which address sexual violence on their campuses. In response to this recommendation, NMU has chosen to include a survey module which addresses students' experiences with sexual assault.

Stakeholders also have identified "retention and persistence" as the second survey module which will be included in the survey. Results from this module are expected to provide valuable information to several NMU student support areas on campus.

NMU's recently completed Core Values include a *Community* component which states the following:

"Northern has a distinctive sense of place – some refer to it as the upper hand. We are a warm, friendly, caring and helpful university. We are collaborative, on campus and off, valuing partnerships and service to each other, the community and the region. Our focus is always on students."

It is NMU's position that attending to our students' mental health experiences is one critical way in which we can strive to be a caring and helpful university while focusing on the well - being of our students.

3. List the project goals, milestones, and deliverables along with corresponding metrics, due dates, and other measures for assessing the progress for each goal. Be sure to include formal evaluations when the project progress will be reviewed.

Goal 1: Complete the requirements to participate in Health Minds Survey

November - December 2016

- Review all survey participation requirements and submit necessary documentation to survey vendor.
- Collaborate with campus stakeholders regarding the possibility of including additional survey components and survey items.
- Complete Institutional Review Board requirements.
- Collaborate with University of Michigan staff and faculty.
- Schedule a tentative date for delivering the Survey.

Goal 2: Administer the Survey

January - February 2017

- Announce the survey to the entire campus community and the Marquette/Upper Peninsula of Michigan communities.
- Provide information to all stakeholders which includes details of the survey, how information will be collected, by whom and for what purpose.
- Investigate incentives for completing the survey; send reminders to students who have not participated.

Goal 3: Review survey results

March - May 2017

- The project lead and other project participants will meet with NMU students, faculty and staff to review survey results.

- Gather input from NMU community stakeholders regarding results.

Goal 4: Develop a final report

June - August 2017

- The final report will include survey results, stakeholder comments and suggestions, and recommendations for improving mental health resources and strategies.

Goal 5: Identify and initiate follow – up strategies

September - November 2017

- Beyond providing a report which includes recommendations based upon findings, the final goal of the project is to set into motion a protocol for further survey administration and a schedule for presenting mental health survey results.
- Key stakeholders will be identified and follow - up strategies in place prior to the end of the Action Project.

4. Describe how various members of the learning community will participate in this action project. Show the breadth of involvement by individuals and groups over the project’s duration.

The Director of NMU’s Counseling and Consultation Services will serve as the lead on this Action Project for its duration. She will complete Goals 1 and 2 (see Question 3). Tasks assigned to Goals 3 – 5 will include members of the President’s Task Force on Mental Health and Well-Being. Membership includes the Action Project Lead, Dean of Students, Director of Public Safety, Director of Housing and Residence Life, one faculty member from the Department of Social Work, and two students. In addition, the Director of Institutional Accreditation and Assessment, Registrar, Director of Equal Opportunity and Title IX, and Director of Institutional Research and Analysis also will be involved in completing Goals 3 – 5.

5. Describe how the institution will monitor project progress/success during, and at the completion of this project. Be sure to specifically state the measures that will be evaluated and when.

Successful completion of the Health Minds Survey requires participating campuses to adhere to a specific step-by-step process from initial application through receipt of survey results. Details regarding the participation process can be found at <http://healthymindsnetwork.org/for-schools/participate> . To receive the full benefit of participating, NMU will make every effort to complete the necessary steps on time.

After receipt of survey data, a formal report presenting NMU results with narrative will be completed as described in the Action Project goals. Prior to the end of the Action Project, a protocol for regular participation in the Health Minds Survey will be completed.

6. Describe the challenges that may be encountered in successfully completing the project or for institutionalizing the learning from the project’s goals.

Possible challenges include low survey response rate from students. However, incentives to participate will be available and are expected to positively impact student participation.

7. Provide any additional information that the institution wishes for reviewers to understand regarding this action project.

None at this time.