

CAPS Mental Health Equity Brief

Fall 2022



CAMPUS HEALTH
**COUNSELING & PSYCH
SERVICES**

This project aimed to investigate the barriers the UA student population may face in accessing mental health services, especially those from marginalized communities. This is the results for the second phase of the study conducted in October-November 2022 (n= 59).

Barriers to Accessing Mental Health Services (n=59)

93%

of students reported **wanting to solve the problem** on their own was a barrier

83%

of students reported thinking that the **problem would get better by itself**

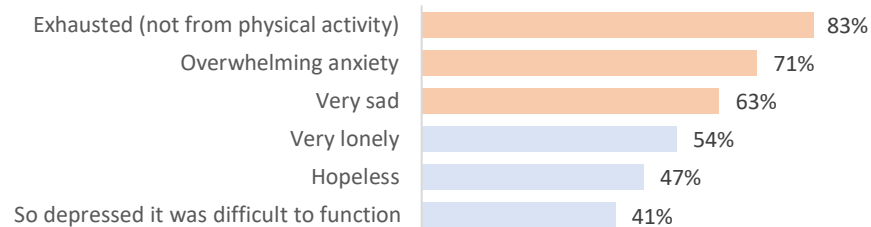
90%

of students reported **difficulty taking time off** was a barrier

Key Insights:

- ✓ **41- 83%** students reported experiencing anxiety and depression symptoms.
- ✓ Students wanting to solve the problem on their own was a top barrier UA students reported when seeking CAPS services. In Phase 1 of this study (Spring 2022), **80%** students had reported facing financial barriers (n=134). Increasing financial support was one of the top student recommendations reported in Spring 2022. In Phase 2 (Fall 2022), the percentage of students reporting financial barriers decreased to **43%** (n= 59).
- ✓ Awareness about CAPS services was a common theme in survey. **78%** of students did not know that CAPS has a searchable provider profile that list specialties and identities of CAPS providers. **49%** did not know about embedded counselors.
- ✓ Top recommendations from students for CAPS included efforts to **improve cultural competency** in counselors so they can better understand and help students with diverse range of racial/ethnic and gender identities, increasing **awareness of CAPS services** through marketing and outreach efforts, and providing **financial support**.

Select mental health symptoms reported by UA students in the past six months



Data Source: Mental Health Equity Study Fall 2022, Campus Health Service (n=59)



64% Of students **felt overwhelmed** by the idea of making an appointment for counseling/therapy services (n=58). Out of those, **92%** **avoided or delayed making an appointment** (n=34) because of this feeling.

Understanding socio-cultural backgrounds and personal identities

44%

of students said **they did not seek help** from a counselor or a therapist because they felt they would not understand or identify with their sociocultural backgrounds, or personal identities

41% students agreed that **CAPS** delivers care that is **sensitive to students' sociocultural backgrounds or personal identities** while **44%** students had **neutral responses**.

22%

of students said that this caused them to avoid seeking help at CAPS specifically

"Counselors who speak foreign languages would be a great help!"

"Improve cultural competency with counseling services"

"Understanding students' background especially when they are from minority group."

More Student Voices from the Focus Group and Interviews:

“I think CAPS proximity with campus health and just like the campus services as a whole gives them a really great chance to be more holistic than they are right now. The clinical psychologist I'm seeing off-campus now, asked me about other areas of life (Physical health etc.). And she's like “we have got to address your diet” because I have a lot of gastrointestinal issues. CAPS is in such a good position to do that...”

“The website is better than it was. It's a little bit clearer with all of the providers that are present and what their specialty and focuses are...”

“it's still kind of unclear as to how it works with insurance. What weekly pays are going to be like co-pays, and that I think some students have still expressed to me at least that they're not sure what the cost is. And I don't know if there's maybe a way to make that a little bit more transparent right from the get go...”

“Time frame would be helpful, knowing what the wait looks like. Because although the resource is there, if it's not available when students need it, it may not be as help. And then an understanding of the scope of what they can cover or assist with because they may not be trauma informed, but they may understand like racial trauma or culturally relevant practices. So, just making the transparency of the information provided to students is as prevalent as possible.”

“There could be more black counselors and personally, I think that was a really big barrier for me because I know a lot of other people, especially within my culture, seek out counselors that are black or brown.”

“I would love groups. I know they have groups, but I've not been able to find information about them online like some lists of “we do groups”. But then you have to ask your practitioner, and then they eventually did get me scheduled. But I wasn't available for them and it was unclear like when they started and finished, so I didn't want to just jump in in the middle. The pricing is a little unclear. I would hope those could be really accessible.”

“Even if they have specific people whose job is to connect people off campus and make sure that they have places for further support. Because it's already daunting to receive mental health treatment and then having to navigate everything.”

“I would love if they could do couples or relationship therapy even if the partner is not a current student at the university.”