

2008 UWEC Counseling Services Needs Assessment



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Introduction

- ❖ Increasing numbers of college students are seeking counseling. There is also evidence that the severity of college students problems Both facts indicate the need for effective counseling on college campuses. In response to these trends, this study revised the 2000 UWEC Counseling Services Needs Assessment Survey to assess the needs of current students a.
- ❖ Roberts, Golding, Towell, & Weinreb (1999) found that college students have a low psychological well-being compared to the general population.
- ❖ The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports females have a higher frequency of mental distress compared to males (2004).
- ❖ Hyun et al. (2006) reported that 82.1% females were aware of counseling as compared to the 67.2% of men. Their study further revealed that 34.8% of females use counseling services compared to 18.7% of males.
- ❖ Students' decisions to pursue counseling depend on the severity of their problems. Current literature indicates that students seek counseling when they felt their problems outweighed their friends' support (Goodman, Sewell, & Jampol, 1984).
- ❖ Research has also found that first year college students do not use counseling services because they neither they need them nor do they receive referrals to them. However, first year students report concerns about studying, relationships, self-esteem, and grief; all of which counseling services could provide support for (? - Insert name -2007).
- ❖ Because the most recent Counseling Services Needs Assessment at UWEC was done in 2000, this study sought current information about students' awareness of and needs for Counseling Services on campus.

Method

- ❖ Interviews with the UWEC Counseling Services staff and other UW System Counseling Services were conducted to obtain feedback about performing counseling needs assessments.
- ❖ A review of the 2006-2007 UWEC Counseling Services Annual Report was done to gather current statistics and to modify the 2000 survey.
- ❖ A pilot study was conducted with the first round of revisions to the 2000 Needs Assessment Survey to obtain feedback about misconceptions and potential changes to be made for the 2008 survey.
- ❖ A random sample of 2,000 undergraduate and graduate fulltime students from the registrars' office was obtained.
- ❖ The 2008 survey was distributed to student e-mail accounts via Websurvey the Wednesday before Spring Break and sent reminder email the Tuesday after Spring Break.
- ❖ 347 participants responded , equaling a 17% return rate.

Results

- ❖ Results demonstrate that UWEC Seniors are more aware of the location of UWEC Counseling Services $X^2 (1, N=148) = 4.87, p < .03$ and that the services they offer are free $X^2 (1, N=148) = 14.13, p < .00$

❖ Descriptive Statistics:

- 58% (N=318) of participants could not locate UWEC Counseling Services
- 84% (N=318) of participants agreed with the addition of a UWEC Counseling Services Presentation during Cube Fest
- The most common ways UWEC students hear about UWEC Counseling Services are (15% or above)

Website	15%
Health Services	20%
Faculty	21%
Posters	22%
Other	23%
Friends	30%

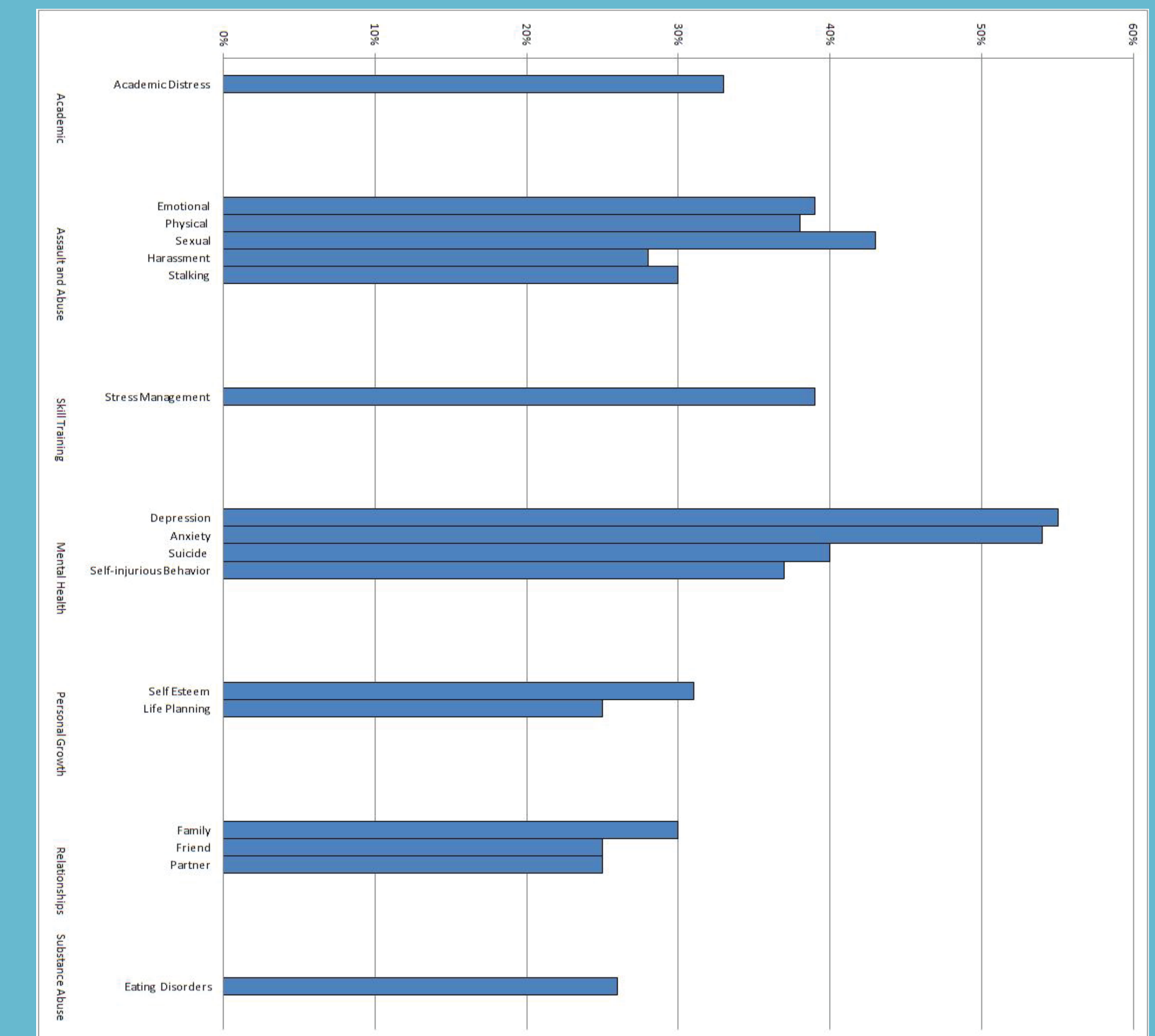
- Students who have utilized UWEC Counseling Services is perceived it as

Relaxed	40%	vs.	Anxious	22%
Hopeful	43%	vs.	Doubtful	13%
Inviting	45%	vs.	Uninviting	7%
Comfortable	62%	vs.	Uncomfortable	13%
Confidential	71%	vs.	Not confidential	1%
Welcoming	72%	vs.	Unwelcoming	3%
Safe	72%	vs.	Unsafe	1%

- UWEC Students reported these barriers the most likely to stop them from to UWEC Counseling Services (15% or above)
 - 17% Did not want people to know that they saw a counselor
 - 20% Thought they would be too embarrassed or uncomfortable to see a counselor
 - 29% Did not know the location of Counseling Services
 - 42% Felt they should be able to solve their own problems
 - 47% Did not believe that their problems were serious enough to see a counselor

Limitations

- ❖ The distribution of the study before spring break may have resulted in a lower return rate.
- ❖ Wording of the instructions for part IV may have been confusing (See part IV of the 2008 survey).
- ❖ Only a third of the respondents were male.



Recommendations for UWEC Counseling Services

1. Increase advertisement of UWEC Counseling Services on campus. For example, posters, website information, and signs in the Old Library and dorms would be useful.
2. Increase awareness of location and services available through UWEC Counseling Services via Phase I and Phase II of freshman orientation.
3. Use the results from part IV of the 2008 UWEC Counseling Services Needs Assessment to aid in the process of finding new staff who will benefit the UWEC Student body and their potential needs for counseling.
4. Students perceive the UWEC Counseling Services as welcoming, safe, and comfortable. But they typically do not feel their problems are serious enough to see a counselor. Increasing their knowledge of the breadth of issues counseling services address could help students to realize their needs and lead them to seek more timely help.

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Counseling Services