

**Faculty Development Day**  
January 13th, 2022

**"It Wasn't Supposed  
to Be this Way."**

**REALISTIC STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING  
STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH**

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FSU Counseling Services

# "It wasn't supposed to be this way."

EDUCATION

## Survey: Nearly 9 in 10 Professors Say Student Mental Health Has Worsened During Pandemic



## Omicron brings fresh concern for US mental health after 'grim two years'

Many Americans' mental health has suffered during the pandemic, and anxiety and depression persists

## *Another Surge in the Virus Has Colleges Fearing a Mental Health Crisis*

After almost two years of remote schooling, restricted gatherings and constant testing, many students are isolated and depressed. Omicron may make things worse.



Home // Radio // Radio Boston

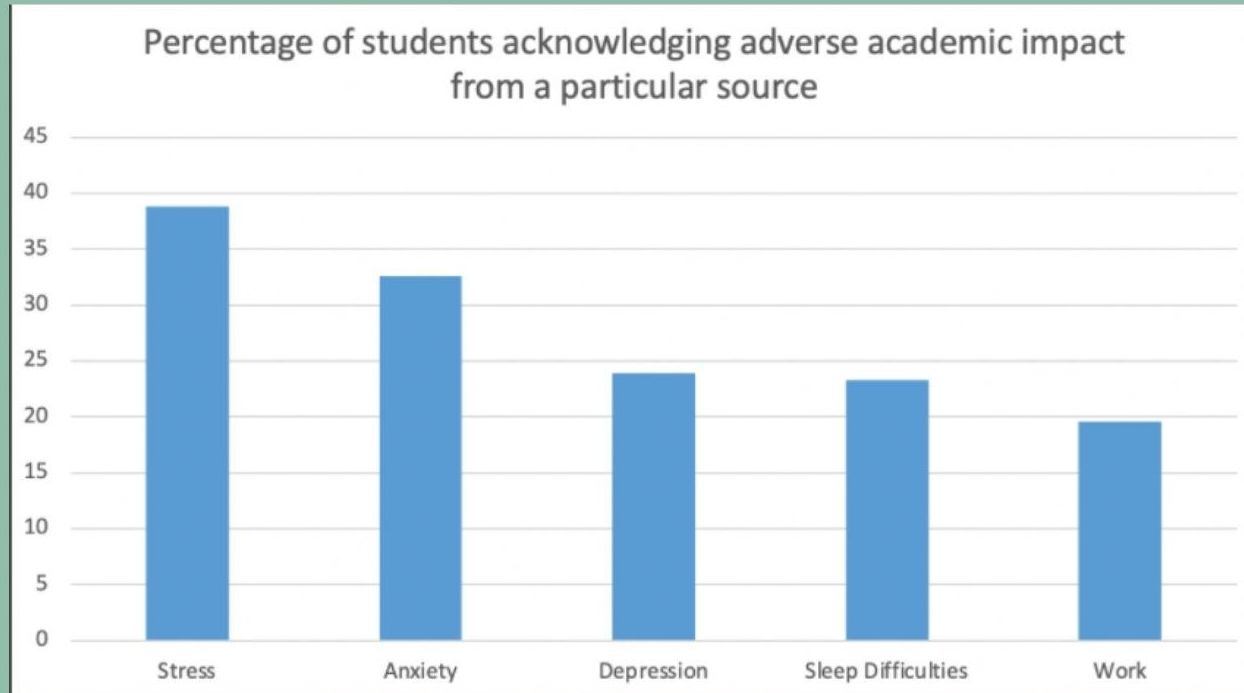


## Balancing public safety and student mental health with omicron

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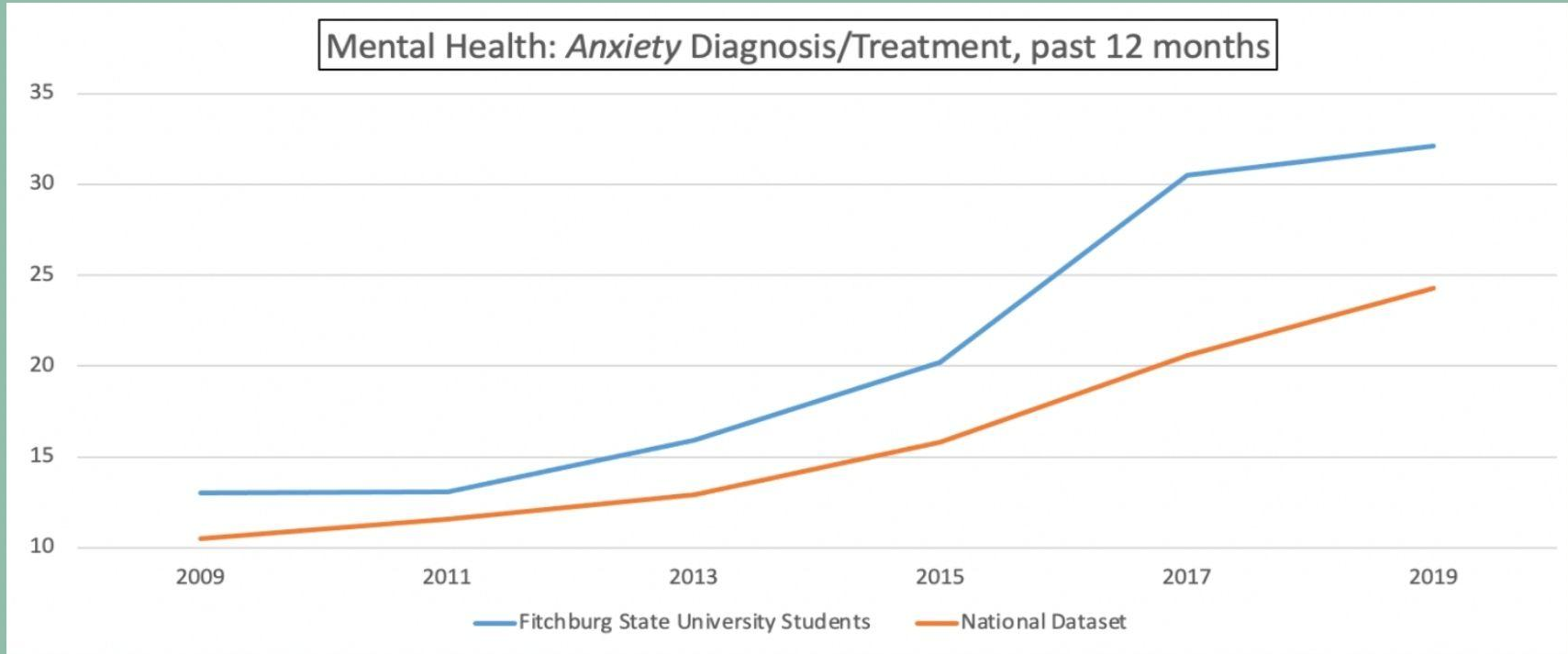
# National College Health Assessment (2019) FSU Data

Prompt : “Within the past 12 months, \_\_\_\_\_ resulted in me receiving a lower grade on an exam, project, or for the course...dropped course, etc.”



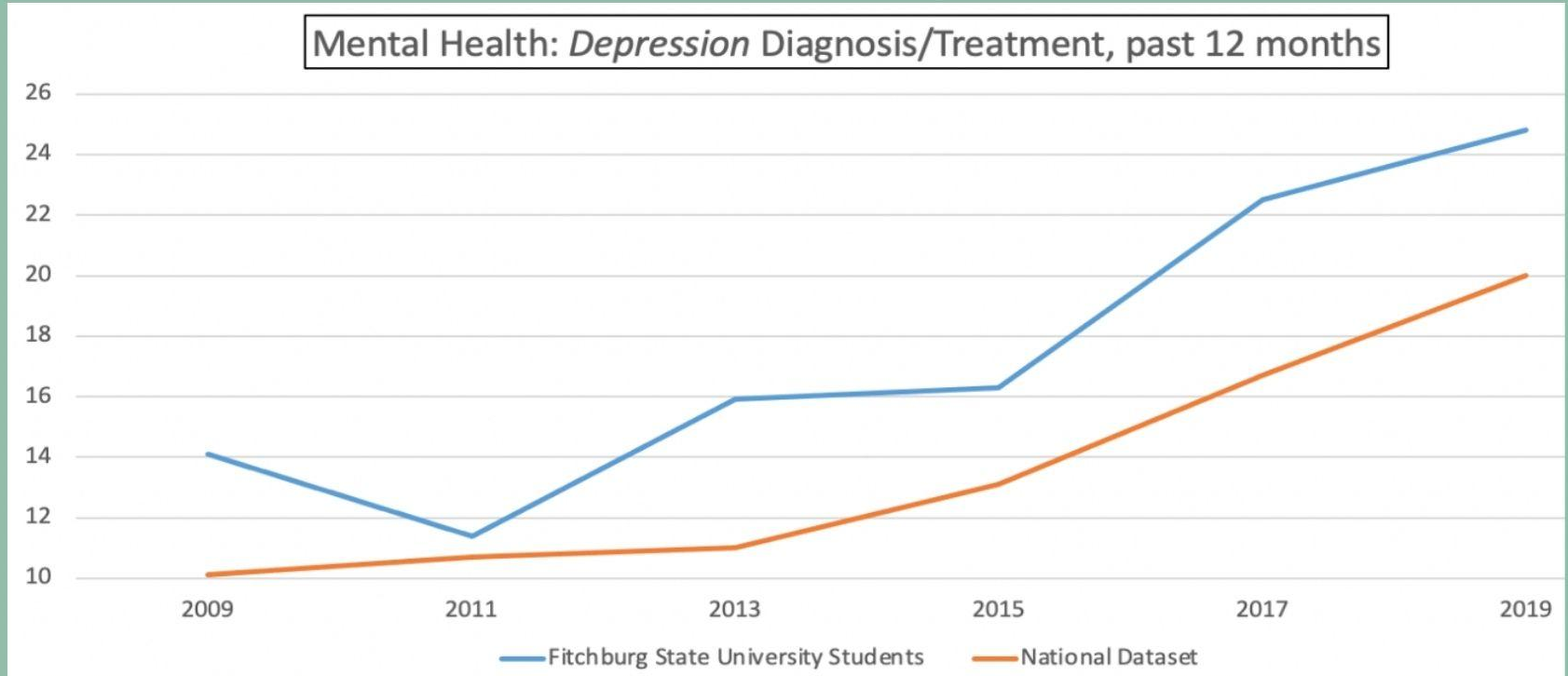
# National College Health Assessment (2019) FSU Data

Prompt : Have you been diagnosed or treated by a professional for any of the following within the last 12 months?



# National College Health Assessment (2019) FSU Data

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# FSU Counseling Services: Students Served



# COLLECTIVE TRAUMA

## PROLONGED

“Collective trauma is extraordinary in that not only can it bring distress and negative consequences to individuals but in that it can also change the entire fabric of a community.”

- KAI T. ERIKSON



# What are we seeing?

Depression

Confusion Isolation

STRESS Grief

*Dissapointment*

Financial Concerns

Anxiety Anger

Loneliness



Hope



# Why are we asking for your help?

- **As faculty on this campus, you get a firsthand look at how a student may be functioning—sometimes before they ever walk through Counseling Services' door.**
- **A timely, compassionate, non-clinical interaction with a student can make a significant difference.**

# Aleah

Aleah is a senior enrolled in one of your academic courses. She is typically attentive, engaged, and conscientious. As the semester progresses you begin to notice that her attendance has become increasingly sporadic. When Aleah does attend class, she appears distracted and fatigued. She has been struggling to complete assignments in a timely manner, if at all.

# Max

Max is a freshman who has been assigned to you as an advisee. Before his first appointment with you, you are made aware that he has two midterm deficiency grades. You are meeting with him today. He shows up to the appointment and seems rather agitated (rapid speech at high volume, lack of eye contact, etc.). As he continues to explain his situation, he becomes tearful, and exclaims that he believes these grades to be unfair, and “complete BS.”

AM I SAFE?\*

HOW AM I  
FEELING?

HOW CAN I TAKE  
CARE OF MYSELF  
RIGHT NOW?

HOW CAN I  
MOST  
EFFECTIVELY  
SUPPORT THIS  
STUDENT IN THIS  
MOMENT?

# Self-Awareness

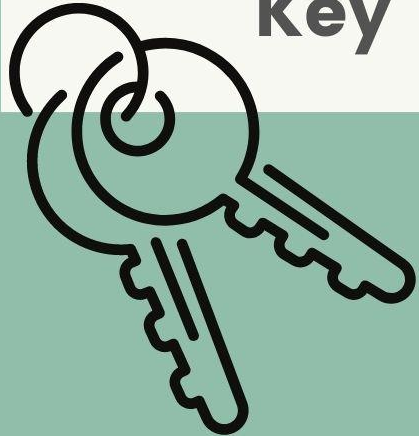
TAKE TIME TO CHECK-IN  
WITH YOURSELF



**\*Please contact FSUPD regarding any concerns  
of physical danger\***

# De-Escalation

## Key Terms



### CO-REGULATION

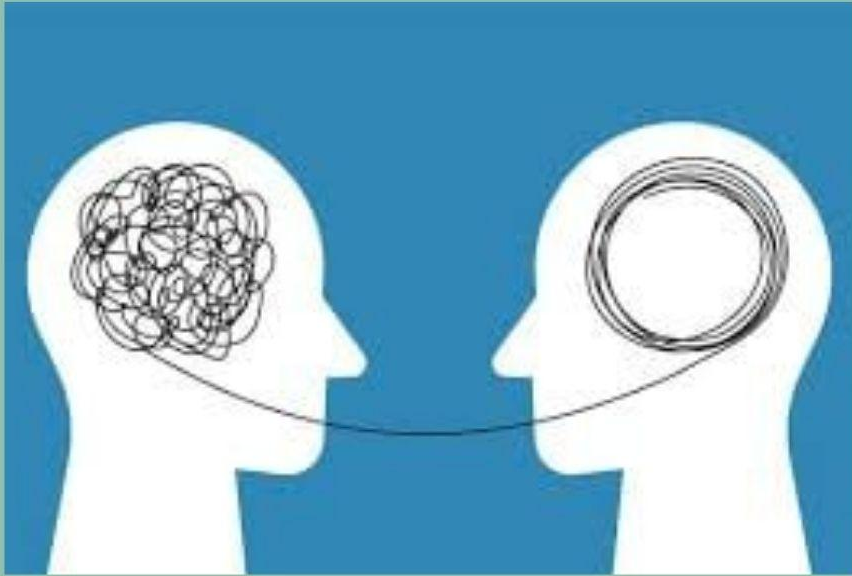
A dynamic process wherein each participant in a given interaction is continuously regulating the behavior of the other participant

### RATIONAL DETACHMENT

The capacity to manage one's own behaviors and refrain from taking someone else's behaviors personally

# COMMUNICATION SKILLS

## Verbal



- Avoid the power-struggle!
- Active listening (reflective, empathic, non-judgmental, etc.)
- Express willingness to help
- Less is more (be clear and concise)
- Provide realistic options
- Communicate boundaries in a kind but firm manner

# Expressing Concern

## How **to** Check-In

“I’ve noticed you haven’t seemed like yourself these past couple of classes... how is everything going?”

## How **NOT** to Check-In

“I’ve noticed you haven’t seemed like yourself these past couple of classes... you’re not depressed are you?”

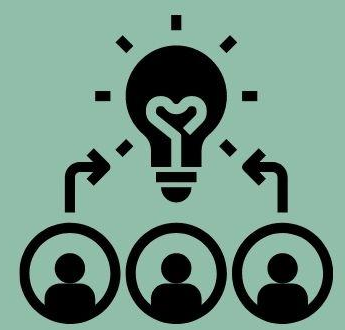
# Communication Skills

## Non-Verbal



- Supportive Body language
- Respect personal space
- Paraverbal communication (tone, cadence, volume)
- Be mindful of exits (do not block an exit)
- Maintain eye contact when indicated
- Communicate at eye level (not standing over someone)

# DISCUSSION



**What are some examples of challenges and/or successes you have experienced in supporting students?**

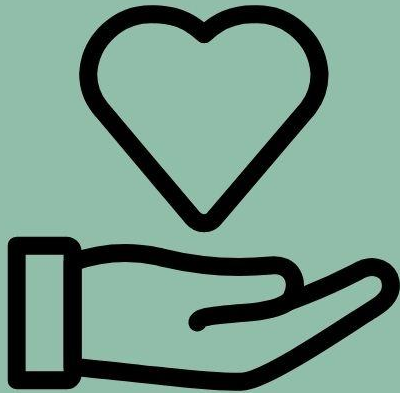


# RESOURCES

- The Office of Counseling Services is currently offering both virtual and in-person counseling appointments. We continue to offer same-day urgent appointments for students in addition to consultation with colleagues concerned about a student.
  - To schedule call: 978-665-3152 or email: [counselingscheduler@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:counselingscheduler@fitchburgstate.edu)
  - Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30a.m.-5p.m.
  - Evening Hours: Tues & Weds 5p.m.-7p.m.
  - Follow us on Instagram @fitchburgstatewellness
- FSU CARE Team
- Call2Talk 24/7 Hotline/Textline: 508-532-2255 or text c2t to 741741

**\*\* For emergencies please contact University Police at 978-665-3111\*\***

# Taking Care of Yourself



**The Employee Assistance Program, or EAP, is a free benefit that provides short-term counseling and various referral services to Fitchburg State University faculty and staff, and their household members. This service is provided by Mass4You and sponsored by the Group Insurance Commission.**

**GIC benefit-eligible employees and their immediate family members can access benefits by either calling Optum's GIC dedicated phone number (1.844.263.1982) or visiting Optum's website: [www.liveandworkwell.com](http://www.liveandworkwell.com) (access code Mass4You).**

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# Trauma-Informed Relational Strategies for De-Escalation

Sponsored by: The Institute for Health and Recovery

Trainers:

**Ellen Cullen, LMHC**

Early Childhood Trauma Systems Specialist and

**Christopher L. Green, LICSW**

Youth and Young Adult Trauma Specialist

[www.healthrecovery.org](http://www.healthrecovery.org)

Under contract with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health/  
Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS)



Additional  
References

**Thank you!**