

## **NCHERM NEWSLETTER FALL 2004**

Hello friends and colleagues. Welcome to the NCHERM Fall 2004 Newsletter. Here's a quick overview of what's inside this issue:

- 1) Updates on NCHERM news and activities
- 2) Great Semester...Great Opportunity.
- 3) Upcoming Fall 2004 NCHERM Seminars and Presentations
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- 5) The NCHERM Spring 2005 Calendar of Seminars
- 6) Book Now for Spring 2005 Campus Visits
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*If you would prefer not to receive our quarterly newsletter, please e-mail [NCHERM@aol.com](mailto:NCHERM@aol.com) and ask to be removed from the subscription list. We'll take care of it right away.*

### **1. Updates on NCHERM News and Activities**

Usually, you would have received this newsletter in August. For two reasons, we decided to wait until mid-semester to release our newsletter this fall. First, we wanted to wait until we had big news to share, and now that our newest video is out, the timing is perfect.

More on that, below.

Our second reason was just a simple time constraint. Brett just finished his 50<sup>th</sup> campus visit since August 15<sup>th</sup>, so there has barely been time to breathe, let alone prepare and send the newsletter. Sorry for delay, but we have the time now, so here it is.

### **2. Great Semester...Great Opportunity**

Fifty campus visits in two and a half months! Is Brett insane? Yes and no. It is a grueling schedule, but with good reason. Many of you know that Brett and Cori are expecting a baby on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Despite Brett's best efforts, we know our baby will arrive when she wants to, and not according to Brett's travel schedule. So, we intentionally packed all our visits into the early part of the semester, to make sure that Brett would be home for the birth. Now he's home, and is working on many of the policy reviews that colleges and universities have recently requested. We appreciate that many of you have contacted us to engage NCHERM to review your campus conduct codes, crisis protocols, student government manuals, confidentiality policies, honor codes, student assistance brochures and other important documents. For those of you who have not yet engaged our services, this is perfect timing. Brett is looking for work to do from home, his turnaround time is quick, and Cori is likely to give you a good price on his services, to keep him home and busy. Contact us today. Once the spring semester rolls around, Brett will be on the road again, so any other reviews will have to wait until May.

### **3. Upcoming NCHERM Seminars and Presentations**

Brett Sokolow will be a featured speaker at the ASJA Circuit III Drive-In Conference at York College on Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup> 2004. He will address Best Practices for Adjudication of Campus Sexual Misconduct.

Brett Sokolow will be presenting two sessions at the National Conference on Student Leadership in Orlando, Florida on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004.

On Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2004, NCHERM will be presenting an Intensive Institute at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, OR. The topic is Crafting a Code of Conduct for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century College.

This is a full-day intensive institute on writing and revising codes of conduct, including both policies and procedures. Most codes are not educational, developmental tools. This workshop will guide participants in a process to re-envision conduct codes as tools of prevention that are connected to the institutional mission and values. Most policies are dense, and are not written for ease of understanding or application. This workshop teaches participants how to make a paradigm shift in how we craft policies and procedures, taking them from reactive rules to proactive guidance.

Participants will be involved in:

- ▶ Learning techniques for assessing policies and procedures
- ▶ Learning the difference between a rule and a policy
- ▶ Determining whether policies have an educational emphasis and impact
- ▶ Determining whether policies have a developmental emphasis and impact
- ▶ Drafting policies for ease of understanding and application
- ▶ Drafting procedures that allow for maximum flexibility and risk management
- ▶ Learning how examples can enhance conduct codes
- ▶ Determining how to connect codes to institutional and community values
- ▶ Acquire a four-step process for drafting policies

We invite you to visit [www.ncherm.org](http://www.ncherm.org) for more information on this Institute. A registration form is below:

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## NCHERM CODE OF CONDUCT INSTITUTE

### REGISTRATION BY CHEQUE OR CREDIT CARD

\_\_\_\_\_ Workshop Fee \$699.99 (please make cheques payable to the NCHERM)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Attendee (\$150.00 each—please include names below)

Each college or university is entitled to send up to three representatives for the \$699.99 registration fee. Additional attendees may be registered for \$150.00 each. All attendees will receive materials and exercises, continental breakfast and buffet lunch as part of the registration fee. Each registrant college is encouraged to bring sample policies and procedures for dissection and improvement by the group.

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\_\_\_\_\_ INSTITUTION  
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#### CREDIT CARD PURCHASERS:

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#### COMPLETE THIS FORM AND FAX OR MAIL TO:

The National Center for Higher Education Risk Management  
20 Callery Way, Willistown PA 19355  
Phone -- (610) 993-0229 Fax – (610) 993-0228  
E-mail: [ncherm@aol.com](mailto:ncherm@aol.com) Website: [www.ncherm.org](http://www.ncherm.org)

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#### **4. Exciting!!! -- New NCHERM Video & DVD Available**

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2004, NCHERM held its videoseminar, Best Practices for Campus Sexual Misconduct Judicial Training at the University of Dayton. The seminar was a great success, with more than one hundred participants at campuses across the country.

One of our desires, in organizing this event, was to be able replace the tape of the 2002 judicial training event that NCHERM has been marketing. While the content was good, the video quality and sound were not up to our demanding standards. The 2004 version was taped digitally, and I am very pleased with the way it turned out. You will be too. It is a four hour tape (also available as a DVD), featuring facilitation by Brett Sokolow and Saunie Schuster (the Senior Assistant Attorney General for the State of Ohio in the Higher Education Section, representing public colleges and universities), and interaction with a live judicial board and judicial boards participating by remote from around the country. This seminar sets the standard for sexual misconduct judicial training, even if we do say so ourselves.

This comprehensive training seminar focused on the best practices for adjudicating sexual misconduct through campus judicial hearings. The training was broadcast live, using judicial officers from the University of Dayton as the on-site training group. Registrants had the opportunity from off-site to train their boards via this televised format, and off-site participants had the opportunity to fax and e-mail questions to the presenters and on-site judicial officers. Now, the full tape of this valuable seminar is available. Please visit [www.ncher.org](http://www.ncher.org) for details.

#### **5. The NCHERM 2005 Calendar of Events**

- ▶ Look for news soon of a February 2005 two-day conference at Catawba College in North Carolina. Brett Sokolow and Alan Berkowitz will present one day focused on Culture Change Strategies for Problem Drinking on Campus and a second day on Culture Change Strategies for Address Campus Sexual Misconduct.
- ▶ Brett Sokolow will be presenting pre-con and post-con sessions at the ASJA 2005 International Conference in Clearwater Beach, Florida. The pre-con presentation is the NCHERM Judicial Decision-Maker Training Academy, an advanced judicial training on policy analysis and deliberation. Brett will present a post-con with Dr. Linda Rowe on the confluence of free speech and sexual harassment issues.
- ▶ NCHERM will be offering several audio and web-seminars throughout the spring of 2005, on topics including sexual misconduct and general judicial training, risk management of problem drinking, and investigation training. Look for information to be posted in December on [www.ncher.org](http://www.ncher.org)
- ▶ Brett Sokolow will Keynote the Guardian Conference at the University of Central Oklahoma on Wednesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2005. This conference focuses on sexual assault and sexual harassment issues for colleges and schools.

## **6. Book Now for Spring 2005 Campus Visits**

We are planning our calendar of visits to campus for spring 2005 now. Please contact us if you would like to arrange a visit from Brett Sokolow and/or Alan Berkowitz. A list of the student programs offered by Brett and Alan is provided below, and you can find out more about their consulting services by visiting [www.nchem.org](http://www.nchem.org). Additionally, please keep in mind that booking Brett Sokolow through Campus Outreach Services is no longer possible—you should call NCHERM directly. We can be reached at: NCHERM • 20 Callery Way • Willistown, PA 19355 • [NCHERM@aol.com](mailto:NCHERM@aol.com) • (610) 993-0229.

### ***Programs Presented by Brett Sokolow That Will Connect With Your Students***

#### **▶ Drunk Sex or Date Rape: Can You Tell the Difference?**

This acclaimed program has been presented on 900 college campuses, and was the Keynote of the 2004 Safe Society Zone Conference. This interactive jury exercise engages the audience in a discussion of consent and incapacity that is crucial for every college campus.

#### **▶ Ten Things Every Student Should Know About Drinking**

This program is not for every campus. Ten Things acknowledges that many college students drink, and is not a “don’t drink” approach. Instead the program offers a harm reduction framework by encouraging protective behaviors and bursting alcohol mythology. In fact, you could say that this program teaches students how to be safer drinkers. It is a message many colleges need to send, but are hesitant to address.

#### **▶ A Conversation About Consent**

This is an advanced program on sexual communication. Men and women make enormous assumptions about consent, and often don't get how it really works. This program asks critical questions such as: Does consent have an expiration date? Can consent be withdrawn? When must consent be given--before, during or after sexual contact? Are there different levels of sexual interaction to which consent must be specifically given? What are some indicators of a lack of clarity in a sexual situation? What are common assumptions men and women make about sex. How consent is like--and unlike—baseball? What is the difference between seduction and coercion?

#### **▶ What You Don't Know About Hazing Can Kill You**

A one hour interactive program for Greeks, Athletes, ROTC, etc. This is a workshop where audience members are challenged to work in small groups and think critically to identify problematic practices that might violate state hazing law and/or campus policy, and propose alternative events and practices that would still allow for group engagement without violating law/policy.

## ***Engaging Educational Programs presented by Alan Berkowitz:***

### **▶ Promoting Consent, Preventing Coercion: What Men and Women Can Do to Prevent Sexual Assault.**

Men and women both must take responsibility for preventing sexual assault, but in different ways. This lecture presents guidelines for relationships in which sexual activity is mutual, uncoerced, and consenting, helps explain men's fear of false accusation, and outlines steps both men and women can take to prevent sexual assault and intervene in risky situations. (For mixed gender audiences.)

### **▶ Is Rape Prevention A Men's Issue?**

This lecture outlines reasons why men must take responsibility for preventing sexual assault. What do men feel about this issue and about the politics of sexual behavior? What can men do to address our fear of false accusation? How do men feel about the way other men talk about women and sex? This lecture is designed to address men's concerns about sexual assault and provide guidelines for consenting sexual intimacy. (For all male groups, including general audiences, members of men's groups—including fraternities and athletic teams—and male faculty and staff. Can also be offered as a 2-hour workshop.)

### **▶ Is What I Want What You Want? Promoting Consent and Preventing Coercion in Intimate Relationships.**

What can men and women do to ensure that all sexual intimacy is mutual, uncoerced and consenting? What are guidelines for ensuring that consent is present? This lecture provides guidelines for what men can do to prevent rape and what women can do to reduce their risk of victimization, and what we can all do to create healthy campuses where sexual assault is uncommon.

### **▶ Taking Back the Night: What it Means for Men and Women.**

“Take Back the Night” marches are common on college campuses and in communities. This keynote address takes a careful look at the different roles women and men can play in Take Back the Night activities, focusing on men’s role as allies in ending violence against women, and on what it means for women to “take back the night.”

### **▶ Effective Strategies for Solving Residence Life Problems.**

This session focuses on more effective leadership skills for addressing campus problems such as substance abuse and sexual assault. Challenges commonly faced by residence life staff are discussed along with effective strategies for creating a sense of community and promoting responsibility for the well being of the living unit.

## **7. Free Article**

As with every issue, we try to provide you with a thought-provoking article. Recently, I came across this one, and have been sharing it with clients. I think you'll find it valuable, too. It is reprinted with permission of the author.

### **Issue Brief**

## **Examining Current Challenges in Secondary Education and Transition September 2004 •**

### **Vol. 3, Issue 1**

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### **The Emergence of Psychiatric Disabilities in Postsecondary Education**

*By Michael N. Sharpe, Brett D. Bruininks, Barbara A. Blacklock, Betty Benson, and Donna M. Johnson*

**Issue:** An unprecedented and growing number of postsecondary students report psychiatric disabilities. How can postsecondary personnel support the success of these students?

### **Defining the Issue**

A significant development in the field of postsecondary disability supports in the last decade has been the proliferation of individuals with psychiatric disabilities. This phenomenon has emerged at a pace that one observer characterized as a "rising tide" (Eudaly, 2002). Measel (1998) found that within one year, five institutions in the Big Ten Conference encountered an increase from 30% to 100% in the number of students served with psychiatric disabilities. At one institution, the University of Minnesota, the number of students reporting a psychiatric disability as their primary disability (285) was more than the combination of students reporting learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders (269). Although there is little systematically collected data to provide a reliable estimate of the emergence of psychiatric disabilities in postsecondary education, information from current sources provides evidence that this issue is likely to come into sharper focus as data from more studies become available.

Despite recent recognition in the postsecondary setting, the growth in the number of individuals declaring a psychiatric disability is consistent with national statistics. Each year about one in five Americans experience a diagnosable psychiatric disability, which includes major depressive disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders, and anxiety disorders (National Institute of Mental Health, 2002). Some psychiatric disabilities remain dormant, manifested only at critical stages of human psychosocial development or by physiological events.

Unger (1992) noted that the onset of major mental illness often occurs between ages 18-25—a time when many young adults are seeking postsecondary education, preparing for future careers, and developing social relationships.

Perhaps the most influential factor resulting in more individuals declaring a psychiatric disorder in the postsecondary setting is how such disabilities are identified and treated. Today diagnostic criteria have expanded so that the term “psychiatric disability” represents a much broader range of disorders and syndromes than before. While once attention was largely focused on the diagnosis and treatment for the “major” psychopathologies (e.g., schizophrenia), the field has broadened to encompass disorders generally requiring less intensive treatment interventions. For example, there is a dramatic increase in the identification and treatment of a number of anxiety disorders within the last decade, particularly those related to social anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and various types of phobic disorders (Swinson, 1997). As diagnostic criteria continue to improve in identifying other types of mental health disorders, it is likely the population of students with psychiatric disabilities in postsecondary education settings will continue to grow.

### **Current Research and Practice**

Some early efforts to address the needs of individuals with psychiatric disabilities within the postsecondary setting occurred as a result of the emergence of supported-education programs. Based on the definition of “supported employment” in the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986, supported-education programs began in the 1980s as a way of providing supports to individuals with psychiatric disabilities in the postsecondary setting (Unger, 1998).

According to Unger (1998), supported-education programs involve three prototypes: (a) a self-contained setting, where students are reintegrated into the postsecondary setting; (b) on-site support, where ongoing support is provided by the institution’s disabilities support staff or a mental health professional; and (c) mobile support, where support is largely provided by community mental health service providers. It is estimated that about 30 supported-education programs currently exist in the United States to serve individuals with psychiatric disabilities in postsecondary programs.

While supported education is a model for serving the needs of students with psychiatric disabilities, the more typical case is that they are served by disability support services (DSS) staff at the postsecondary level, or by community agencies not necessarily affiliated with DSS or the postsecondary institution.

Many DSS staff have traditionally received training in a disability area related to learning and instruction (e.g., learning disabilities) and do not feel adequately trained to address the needs of individuals with psychiatric disabilities. Indeed, some DSS staff report that they are often challenged in meeting the needs of students with psychiatric disabilities. They indicate efforts to provide accommodations are not as clear as in other disability areas (Sharpe & Bruininks, 2003) or that working with students with psychiatric disabilities might require addressing multiple, complex problems such as social isolation, withdrawal, and academic failure (Blacklock, Benson, & Johnson, 2003). In addition, many DSS providers are not fully informed about services available in the community. The resulting lack of collaboration prevents some students

from accessing needed services (Whelley, Hart, & Zaft, 2004). Clearly, serving students with psychiatric disabilities in the postsecondary setting represents new challenges to many DSS providers.

While there is only limited research on this issue to guide practice, information has recently become available that helps identify some barriers faced by students with psychiatric disabilities and service providers alike (Blacklock, Benson, & Johnson, 2003). Based on the results of 39 focus groups conducted with postsecondary DSS staff, faculty, administrators, and students with psychiatric disabilities, Blacklock et al. (2003) identified five primary barriers that impact the educational experiences of students and service-delivery issues for providers. These include:

***Stereotypes and Stigma***—All of the focus groups stated that students with psychiatric disabilities often face incorrect, stereotyped views about their disability and endure the stigma and negative consequences that frequently accompanies disclosure of such a disability.

***Complex Nature of Psychiatric Disabilities***—Students feel challenged to simultaneously manage their disability and maintain academic performance that reflects their abilities. Service providers and faculty share students' concern about this complex issue.

***Access to Resources***—All focus groups indicated that students with psychiatric disabilities face additional barriers because of their need to seek out services within bureaucracies (educational or governmental) that are unclear and uncoordinated. These extra efforts are necessary to maintain their health insurance, student status, and access to mental health and disability services.

***Access to Information and Services***—Many students in the focus groups expressed frustration with the lack of information about psychiatric disabilities and limited access to services that would allow them to effectively manage their disability.

***Organizational and Institutional***—Focus group participants identified a lack of coordination and communication between service providers on and off campus as additional barriers students with psychiatric disabilities face at the postsecondary level.

The identification of these barriers appears to be consistent with other observations (Collins, 2001; Eudaly, 2002; Loewen, 1993; Angle, 1999; Unger, 1992). To address these barriers, Blacklock, Benson, and Johnson (2003) advocate four strategies: (a) implementing universal instructional design strategies to improve the learning experiences for all students, including those with psychiatric disabilities, (b) creating sub-communities to foster social connections for students with psychiatric disabilities, (c) improving clarity, coordination, and communication with all key stakeholders, including inter-organizational and community-based service providers, and (d) promoting access to resources for all key stakeholders through information sharing and training efforts.

A common theme in the literature relating to the support of students with psychiatric disabilities is how such services should be configured at the postsecondary level. This issue not only involves the “mission” or “values” of the program (Unger, 1998), but also the need to articulate the parameters in which students will be served. Efforts to outline overall program mission and

values will establish a scope of services relative to the institutional and community resources available. This activity can also be helpful in clearly defining how support services will be accessed and maintained by students with psychiatric disabilities. Through a series of interviews conducted with DSS staff in Big Ten universities and colleges, Sharpe and Bruininks (2003) identified several basic requirements common to these institutions:

**Documentation**—Students with psychiatric disabilities must provide current documentation by a qualified medical or mental health professional to qualify for DSS services.

**Diagnostic Criteria**—Generally, a diagnosis must reflect criteria established by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR) or the International Classification of Diseases Manual, Tenth Edition (ICD-10). Moreover, the diagnosis must meet disability criteria established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

**Accommodations**—Although clinical input regarding functional limitations and instructional accommodations are considered, DSS staff generally make the final determination regarding what specific accommodations will be provided.

**Accountability**—In nearly all cases, the declaration of a psychiatric disability does not exempt one from a code of conduct and similar policies established by the institution.

The processes used to notify postsecondary instructional staff about the need for accommodations are not always consistent. In some cases, the student is obligated to discuss the need for accommodations directly with the instructor. In others, a letter or memo was sent to the instructor by DSS staff regarding accommodation needs for a student (Sharpe & Bruininks, 2003).

While this provides a basic overview of current research and practice in serving students with psychiatric disabilities within postsecondary settings, much more work needs to be done. At this point, only a small glimpse has been captured about this growing population of students. Much needs to be learned about the overall nature of students with psychiatric disabilities entering postsecondary education settings. Currently little accurate information exists regarding the overall prevalence and variability of students with psychiatric disabilities. For example, little is known about how many students exhibit severe and persistent mental illness in relation to those whose illness is considered “mild.” This evidence would do much to illuminate the extent to which the students with psychiatric disabilities need psychological treatment concurrent with their educational experience.

### **Strategies for Practice**

Despite little empirical evidence regarding strategies leading to increased positive academic, social, and employment outcomes for students with psychiatric disabilities, a range of instructional accommodations has been collected and disseminated through various studies, professional networks, and training activities. The accommodations shown in Table 1 are most common and can be implemented with cost-efficiency and relative ease.

The accommodations are universal in the sense that they are equally applicable to most types of disabilities. This is good news for students with psychiatric disabilities in the postsecondary setting—accommodations differ little from those typically provided to all students with disabilities (Sharpe, Johnson, & Murray, 2003). What remains unknown, of course, is how effective these types of accommodations are for students with psychiatric disabilities.

**Table 1. Accommodations for Students with Psychiatric Disabilities**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Extra time and/or a private environment for exams | • Modified deadlines for assignments              |
| • Priority registration                             | • Reduced course load                             |
| • Audio recording of lectures                       | • Preferential classroom seating                  |
| • Notetakers for lectures                           | • Early availability of syllabus and/or textbooks |

## Recommendations

- Reflect upon broader, programmatic issues—specifically, the mission of the DSS provider and the policies that may—or may not—be in place to address the needs of students with psychiatric disabilities in the postsecondary setting. When a clear direction (e.g., a “mission”) has been defined for the DSS program, it is possible to identify opportunities for improving or enhancing services to students with psychiatric disabilities. For example, developing collaborative relationships with community-based health professionals might be an option to begin building a support network for students with psychiatric disabilities. DSS staff also may opt to communicate with institutional counseling services to serve as adjunct support system for students.
- Realize that, unless trained and licensed, the role of postsecondary support personnel is not that of mental health professional. Nor should they feel compelled to expand their role beyond the scope of their primary responsibility—to facilitate instructional supports for students with disabilities. Because many DSS staff are already consumed with excessive caseloads, it is even more imperative to collaborate with all types of partners to develop, implement, and maintain innovative strategies for addressing the needs of students with psychiatric disabilities.
- Review Unger’s (1998) description of philosophy, mission, values, and program policies for programs focused on students with psychiatric disabilities. For DSS staff who want to pursue a comprehensive approach to providing services to students with psychiatric disabilities in postsecondary settings, supported education provides a model and template of services that can be fully or partially replicated.
- Design and implement policies to reflect clearly defined roles and responsibilities for postsecondary support staff. Several of these policies were presented in the previous section (i.e., documentation, diagnostic criteria, accommodations, accountability). Further information is available from Web sites of two- and four-year postsecondary institutions.

## Conclusion

Muckenhaupt (2000) has suggested that the impact of untreated psychiatric disabilities is “staggering.” Only recently has this population been recognized within the postsecondary

setting, presenting a challenge to service systems and providers alike. While research on best practice in this area is clearly lacking, efforts continue on behalf of many disability support service providers to develop and implement models of service to meet this challenge. To support these efforts, a “rising tide” of research, information sharing, and training will also be necessary to match the growth that in all likelihood will continue.

*Michael Sharpe, Brett Bruininks, and Donna Johnson are with the Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota; Barbara Blacklock and Betty Benson are with Disability Services at the University of Minnesota.*

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