

## COUNSELING SERVICE

Dear Bowdoin College Community,

This year Counseling Service engaged with several key campus-wide issues – specifically conversations about racial identity and concerns about safety and the sequelae related to a series of off campus sexual assaults. This was a somewhat unique year in this regard given the amount of time, support, and emotional distress related to both of these major foci for the campus as a whole and in turn our staff.

In addition, Counseling continues to manage a high percentage of student difficulties related to anxiety. Anxiety is the single mental health concern that has continued to steadily rise amongst all other mental health diagnoses. This is based on data analyzed by the Penn State research consortium which includes several hundred colleges and universities, of which Bowdoin is one. Our goal regarding this rising trend is to assist students in developing an effective and integrated range of practices to manage anxiety, worry, and stress so that they leave Bowdoin with lifelong skills for negotiating the complexity of the world.

A third ongoing area of emphasis for Counseling is the training and education of the campus to identify, support, and refer students who might be struggling with serious mental health issues in the form of depression, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, and suicidal ideation or plans. The value of training segments of the campus community every year through informal and formal programs helps to ensure that we as a community care about the mental and emotional wellbeing of students. Toward this end, Counseling seeks to maintain a strong cooperative relationship with the faculty, residential life team, dean's office, center for sexual and gender diversity, spiritual life, multicultural affairs, health center, career planning, women's resource center, athletics and athletic training along with peer health and other student groups dedicated to supporting mental health issues on campus.

This year we provided 26% of the student body with individual counseling and psychiatric support. In addition, Counseling connects with hundreds of other students through our group programs, sports psychology consultations, workshops, and wellness classes (meditation, Tai Chi, and Yoga).

For more information on Counseling Services at Bowdoin College, please contact the director at [bhershbe@bowdoin.edu](mailto:bhershbe@bowdoin.edu).

Regards,

Bernie Hershberger, Director  
Counseling Service and Wellness Programs