

Training Health Sciences Faculty to Deliver the Pitt Personal Wellness Program to Graduate Students

Laura J Dietz, PhD &
Jamie L Kulzer, PhD
Department of Counseling & Behavioral Health
School of Health & Rehab Sciences



Motivation

- Graduate students are at increased risk for stress and mental health disorders and there is a significant gap in available services at university counseling centers
- Personalized education interventions highlighting self-care may be an effective first step to support graduate students experiencing elevated levels of stress and other mental health symptoms.

Project Description

We will develop a training protocol for health sciences faculty to deliver the Pitt Personal Wellness Program to graduate students in their programs and assess the fidelity of cross-faculty implementation and graduate student outcomes.

The Pitt Personal Wellness Program

- An evidence-based curriculum consisting of 3, 1-hour classes presented to first-year health science graduate students every 5 weeks across a 16-week semester to provide psychoeducation about self-care and strategies for stress reduction.
- Piloted in 156 SHRS graduate students across 5 programs through funding from a 2020 Forge Your Own Path Grant through the Provost Office. Students reported moderately high acceptability ratings and significant decreases in perceived stress and number of stressful situations from pre- to post-program assessment (Dietz, Kulzer & Kondis, 2022).



To develop and pilot a **training program for health sciences faculty** to deliver the **Pitt Personal Wellness Program**, an evidence-based, self-care protocol, to support their **graduate students' mental health and well-being**



Project Deliverables

- We will develop a synchronous and asynchronous training program for health sciences faculty to deliver the the Pitt Personal Wellness Program to first-year graduate students in their respective programs
- We will partner with faculty from several graduate programs, including the PA and PT, programs, and train them to administer the Pitt Personal Wellness Program to first-semester graduate students.
- The faculty trainees will conduct the Pitt Personal Wellness Program by leading the 3, 1-hour classes to students every 4.5 weeks over a 16-week semester, with the trainers (Drs. Dietz and Kulzer) observing their fidelity in presenting the course to their students
- Graduate students will participate in program evaluation of the Pitt Personal Wellness Program as delivered by faculty trainees and we will collect outcome measures before, during, and after completion of the program.
- We will analyze our data and prepare manuscripts with our results to submit to peer-reviewed journals. We will also pursue opportunities to advance wider dissemination and scaling through commercialization development

Potential Impact

- This project will further the scalability and sustainability of a personalized wellness program for graduate students in the health sciences by providing a transportable curriculum for faculty that are not familiar with mental health practices.
- This training program, if effective, has the potential to place the University of Pittsburgh at the forefront of personalizing mental health education for graduate students in the health sciences.

References and Acknowledgements

Dietz, L. J., Kulzer, J. L., & Kondis, P. (2022). Developing a personalized self-care curriculum for graduate students in the health sciences. *Nursing & health sciences*, 10.1111/nhs.13010. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nhs.13010>

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