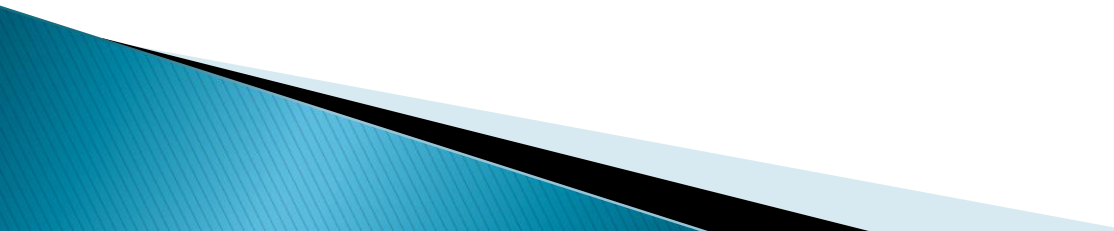


Counselors on TSGB Summer 2014: Summary Report

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Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
November 2014

Outline

- ▶ Results from survey of those aboard the TSGB
 - ▶ Introducing the Counselors
 - ▶ Feedback from the Counselors
 - ▶ Utilization rates
 - ▶ Conclusions and recommendations
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Origination of Counselors on Cruise in 2014

▶ Fall 2013

- Discussions with Psychologist Ian Wallace initiated by VP of Student Affairs Kreta and Provost Jakubowski
 - Further consultation with Captain Bolton, Dr. Wilbur, and President Cropper
 - Points of discussion
 - Executive Order 1053 – Mental Health Services
 - Influence of CFA
 - Defining the role of the counselor on cruise
 - Service delivery, evaluation of experience (e.g., needs assessment)

▶ Spring 2014

- Hiring of temporary counselors for 1-month positions
 - Developed position description, received approval, advertised, reviewed applications, interviewed, and extended offers.
- Counselors on Cruise oriented to the position
 - Orientation manual and individual orientations via phone and in person

Survey Monkey Results:

Quantitative

- ▶ Respondents: 31
- ▶ Questions
 - Which TSGB cruise did you sail in summer 2014?
 - 71% aboard Cruise 1
 - What was your status on cruise?
 - 55% cadets
 - 26% faculty
 - 19% staff
 - Were you aware that a Counselor was aboard and providing mental health services for cadets, faculty, and staff (e.g., counseling)?
 - Yes = 97%
 - Apart from counseling appointments, did you see the Counselor around the ship during your cruise?
 - Yes = 77%

Survey Monkey Results: Quantitative

- **How important is it to have a Counselor on cruise?**
 - 61% reported it to be important (moderately to extremely)
 - 26% reported it to be very important
 - 23% neutral
 - 13% Not at all or of low importance
- ▶ **What is your level of support for Counselors on future TSGB cruises:**
 - ▶ 67% in favor (43% strongly favor)
 - ▶ 30% neutral
 - ▶ 3% strongly oppose (1 respondent)

Survey Monkey Results

▶ Qualitative responses:

◦ Strengths and weaknesses:

- Some people have never been really isolated. ships have a tendency to do that. Counselor can add support to those who need it most. as far as down sides, maybe just another mouth to feed.
- Cruise is very stressful for all persons
- It is nice to have someone to talk to. but I didn't feel comfortable talking to the counselors that were on the cruise with us.
- I thought having a counselor on cruise was an excellent resource for dealing with the stress.
- Cadets, faculty and staff that receive counseling at other time can continue their treatment. Cruise is stressful and counseling can help.
- I think it is important for younger students who have never been in a shipping environment before and may have trouble coping.
- I enjoyed many of the inputs that the counselor had into the bears tale.
- If we have any problems the counselor will help us.
- Provides help to cadets for a time that is very tough for many.
- if they help students cope with cruise and related problems it is good.
- Strengths: 1. Counseling difficult students who are bullies or causing problems. 2. Counseling staff and faculty that are going thru difficult times in life. 3. Educating people to the benefit of conseling. 4. Educating people to the workings of the mind and how to live at the highest level of life and be the most benefit to those around you.
- I don't know that many took advantage of the opportunity for counseling. I also think that when a cadet is struggling with issues that are grounds for their dismissal if found out, that they are afraid of talking to CMA staff regardless of the privacy promise.
- Will prevent cadets from committing suicide
- The counselor was a very big plus compared to past cruises. We had two different counselors and both did a great job.
- Enabling

Survey Monkey Results

▶ Qualitative responses:

◦ Suggestions and recommendations:

- Would have been nice to actually see the counselor walking around and interacting with people during the duration of their stay aboard the ship. Instead, it felt like they were just an invisible voice writing for the Bear's Tale.
- Continue program, I would rather have the counselors than ballasting techs
- Counselors need to be available at times where the cadets aren't working. (more late night hours) and I didn't know how to get a hold of the counselor to set up an appointment besides talking in public which I wouldn't do.
- Next time I would suggest having the counselor do the joke postings in the Bear's Tale as well as the counselor's house of availability.
- They did well as far as I can tell. We don't want to pressure people to use this service.
- I think its a good idea. Even if the Counselor is underutilized his/her presence is helpful.
- I don't know to what extent people came to use the counselor on the cruise, but the idea of having one available was nice. Staying open and friendly as counselors normally are.
- Commandants should have a counseling degree.
- seemed that there was a lot the commandants had to do to keep order. maybe Counselors can help lower the stress.
- 1. We need a librarian or a volunteer group to man the library. Could the Counselor to this duty? The Student Chapter of the Society of Port Engineers could help collect books and work during the school year to put books on the shelf. Call John Rodgers cell 510-290-9952 and I will help in this regard. 2. Both counselors on the second cruise were very helpful to me, personally and to my students. Please keep this effort going and contact me if you need any support or reference. Thank you, John Rodgers, ET Faculty
- I think that the commandants should have experience in counseling.
- Outreach

The Counselors

- ▶ *Cruise 1*
- ▶ April 24 – May 23: James Loew, MA, LPC, NCC
- ▶ *Jim is a 1973 graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. He served on active duty in the Coast Guard for 25 years, spending almost 10 years at sea; shore duty included a tour at the Coast Guard Academy managing cadet professional development programs, teaching nautical science and sailing in the cutter Eagle on summer cruise. After retirement Jim returned to school and earned an MA in Community Counseling. After several years of working in agencies Jim opened a private counseling and consulting practice in Florence. Jim is a licensed professional counselor in the state of Alabama.*
- ▶
- ▶ May 23 – June 25: Ian Wallace, PhD
- ▶ *Dr. Wallace is a licensed psychologist who joined Cal Maritime in 2013. He earned a doctoral degree in Counseling Psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). Dr. Wallace has provided counseling services since 2001, working in medical, psychiatric, and community settings, as well as multiple college counseling centers. Dr. Wallace has over 5 years of teaching experience and he is a published author of scholarly articles and book chapters. His areas of expertise include college counseling, marriage and family therapy, multicultural counseling, and health psychology. He was raised in New Jersey and enjoys spending time with his family and the outdoors.*

The Counselors

- ▶ *Cruise 2*
- ▶ June 25 – July 21: John Ulrich, PhD
- ▶ *John Ulrich Ph.D. is a licensed psychologist in private practice from Traverse City, Michigan, home of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy. He earned his doctoral degree from Andrews University and bachelor's degree from Goshen College. Dr. Ulrich has worked in family counseling centers and group private practice before entering solo practice. He provides individual, couple and group therapy addressing depression, anxiety, sexual abuse and general difficulties adjusting to life's many challenges. He is married to a college librarian and has three young adult children. In his spare time he enjoys gardening, sailing, cross-country skiing and playing with his Border Collies.*
- ▶ July 22 – August 24: Simone Brooks, LMFT
- ▶ *I was born in England, educated through my "sophomore" year and then my parents emigrated to Evanston, Wyoming where we had relatives. I graduated from high school and then moved to Duluth, Minnesota and entered the Benedictine community. I earned my undergrad degree, taught school, got itchy feet, and left Minnesota. I also got married and we moved to California, Indiana, Texas, Colorado and back to California! I have three children and three grandchildren. I worked at Cal Maritime for 17 years, earned my MA and my Marriage and Family Therapy license, and now I work for Child Protective Services. I am glad to be back at CMA!*

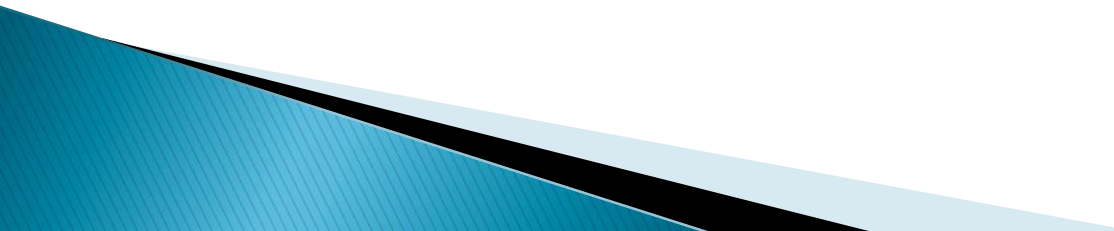
Feedback from the Counselors

- ▶ The following information was gathered during a conference call with the counselors during the start of the fall 2014 semester
- ▶ *What did you most enjoy about the counseling on cruise experience?*
 - Work with cadets, challenges, suicide aftermath, back at sea, learning cal maritime,
 - Receptivity and response of cadets (in and out of office), faculty/staff conversations, relp with CMO Patricio Chavez, helpful to captain for consultation, Bear's tale,
 - Existing relationship with captain, busy (students and staff), high level of support was great and needed

Feedback from the Counselors

- ▶ *What did you least enjoy about the counseling on cruise experience?*
 - x-ray room is non-therapeutic, office hours,
 - more counseling-friendly office,
 - Lack of leadership from Texas (e.g., commandants. One with son onboard). Excessive alcohol referrals. Out of her scope of practice, involved in decision-making to remove students, bed in stateroom,

Feedback from the Counselors

- ▶ *What most surprised you about the counseling on cruise experience?*
 - Change in port and schedule, lack of leadership and divisiveness between faculty and command,
 - Heavy handed punitive response at times
 - Alcohol incidents, avoidance of counseling/support by students and spontaneous interaction with counseling,
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Feedback from the Counselors

- ▶ *What suggestions do you have for improving the counseling work, logistics, as well as hiring or other areas?*
 - Support groups or psychoed (e.g., alcohol, repeating cruise students,), targeting students at risk (e.g., psychotropic meds), organized command activities in port (food, sports, healthy activities),
 - Better orientation to ship life and etiquette, IT problems (port passes at sea), better orientation for PNC (e.g., what constitutes a record vs. not creating a record), divisional level group meetings (e.g., alcohol), presentations and discussions (relp issues, positive psychology) as part of expectations, ,
 - Business not a measure of need (available in case),

Feedback from the Counselors

- ▶ Additional comments:
 - Command support for the counseling program was negligible. The command climate in general was unwelcoming.
 - Counselor berthing arrangements were indicative of command lack of priority/precedence of counseling services.
 - Lots of ideas for counselor engagement –support groups, movie nights with counseling themes and maybe some processing, other ideas ... just don't know if possible to engage cadets knowing their time demands and rotating schedules. Some will have to be trial and error to see what works. Efforts toward what appeared to be a “women's support group” started by Nurse Practitioner Chris Smith appeared to be well received with strong participation.
 - Rarely did I experience drop-ins during office hours. Would be interested in others experiences. Being tied to an office during office hours may be counter-productive if there are other ways to engage and be known to cadets/faculty/staff. Should be a well published method, not only for referrals, but for cadets/faculty/staff to electronically (or via other means) make appointments for counseling services.
 - I do not believe the location (X-ray space) was conducive to counseling (including removing materials every day). If counseling is to continue on board I suggest a dedicated space be located and outfitted appropriately. This space would have a computer, locked storage for files, stocked materials/resources for counselor and clients (depression, suicide, anxiety, stress, relationships, alcohol...) and be outfitted with comfortable chairs, lighting, etc.
 - Office hours in a non-therapeutic environment (X-Ray).
 - Lack of leadership on board, lack of command support for the counseling program, and a divisive wardroom/command climate.

Utilization rates

- ▶ Average of 2–3 clients per day while at sea (minimal use of counseling while at port)
 - Presenting concerns included alcohol abuse, depression, anxiety, adjustment, relationship problems, suicidal ideation (approximately 5–7% of clients)
 - Majority of clients were cadets
 - ▶ Countless informal discussions, talks, and consultations
 - ▶ Multi-week meetings between Commandant staff and Medical team
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Conclusions and Recommendations

- ▶ This first year served as an initial trial (or pilot study) for staffing a counselor on cruise for the entirety of both cruises.
- ▶ Include my conclusions and recommendations from a clinical standpoint
- ▶ Counselors on TSGB Cruises in summer 2014 were known (97%) and visible (77%) to a large majority of students, staff, and faculty.
- ▶ A majority feel that having a counselor aboard the TSGB is important (61%) and they favor counselors aboard in the future (67%).
 - Only 1 respondent expressed opposition to having counselors on future cruises (30% neutral)
- ▶ Recommendations made to have the counselor more involved and visible, yet there is feedback that the climate from leadership is not supportive of the counselor
 - This creates a dilemma for how the counselor can be most effective

Conclusions and Recommendations

- ▶ Support for the added benefit of just knowing the counselor is available and aboard
- ▶ Interest in the counselor having expanded hours (evenings)
- ▶ Suggestions for the counselor providing an additional service (e.g., library)
 - This may be a viable option so long as the role is not evaluative and therefore cause a conflict of interest (e.g., as assistant Commandant).

Conclusions and Recommendations

- ▶ Counselors thoroughly enjoyed the experience and made themselves available to cadets and staff
- ▶ High likelihood that previous counselors remain interested in future opportunities
 - As well as larger pool of interested and qualified counselors
- ▶ Budgetary concerns
 - Value of counselors on cruise compared to campus needs (health educator, part-time/back-up counseling support, other)
- ▶ Final Conclusion:
 - Although evidence from evaluating counselor on cruise demonstrates positive perception and support for counseling on cruise in the future, Summer 2014 served as an initial trial in the evolution of improving the role of counselor on cruise. Much has been learned from this initial experience and can be applied to future cruises
 - Outreach, greater visibility, greater utility by adding role (e.g., librarian)