Crosswalk safety

- Concerns with crosswalks on/near campus include: darkness, lack of attention (both drivers and pedestrians), nervous campus neighbors, glare in the morning has caused accidents in the past on Smith’s campus, etc.
- Crosswalk by admissions can be unsafe – cars don’t fully stop, especially during “rush hour”/evening. Can also be unsafe for students on bikes.
- Green Street & Parking garage crossing walks also a problem, by the Felt Building (on a carve,= has an overflow parking lot); crosswalk at the edge of West Street is inaccessible for wheelchairs on the far side of the street due to broken sidewalk.
- 2010 corridor improvements included consistent look, signage, signaling, curb extensions to make pedestrians more visible, other speed reductions to increase safety
- A town study will be done this summertime investigate all city sidewalk
- Gary suggest meeting with the DPW to see what can be done; hope to reduce glare, increase lighting/illumination
- Noted that UMASS has yellow signs that warn of upcoming crosswalks
- Suggestion: could arm bands be left at crosswalks for students crossing at night?

Next steps:

- Dennis, will have preliminary meeting with planning director next week
- Group to think about culture & awareness - Rosalie, Jess, Katya, Toula (reach out to Julie Ohotnicky)
- Group to work with Dennis - Barbara Williams, Kari, Sam Masinter

Mental health and wellness update

- Schacht Center is fully staffed with Assistant Directors.

Mental health

- Kris reports that counseling services are well-used and growing (2% growth annually), 32.5% of students are using the services (includes a wait list), has reached cap for staffing levels (Not smith specific -- demand for services is growing on campuses all over)
- Concerns - more students want services, seriousness of what’s presenting is changing (crisis & hospitalization, and long-term medical leave requests nearly doubled)
- Student petition circulated about access to services, collected a lot of data, analyzed well concerned about wait times, being referred to community.
- 82% reported benefitting from counseling services, want more students to have more access
- There’s an opportunity to have a conversation on campus about who we serve and how we serve. Do we need more staffing? (All colleges say yes, but how can we appropriate deal with these requests?)
- Other good things happening: Trustees contracted with the Jed Foundation to look at suicide prevention (1300 students in study -- 55% of the student body); student advisory committee giving great feedback and work with staff to make changes; received funding from Dean of the College for pre doctoral fellow (licensed clinician) to work on diversity & inclusion (hypothesis: election had effect on students accessing services, spike in requests); Grant Innovation to develop new programming to reach out to
students who are underserved in terms of mental health support; we’ve built an environment at Smith where students can reach out of services

• Working to continue to build community relationships: can be hard to find providers, co-pay for students using school insurance, working to build more relationships with the community/on campus

• Laura mentions that disability services also looking at their numbers (climbed dramatically); 560 students using disability services (half with mental health diagnosis), dealing with day to day support of students

• Students express concern about first-year stress; counseling services sees proportionate use of services by class year, diversity

Medical services

• Kerry-Beth reports an increase in overlay between mental health meeting traditional care, a lot more foot traffic in new location, seeing an increase in walk-in care requests; looking at how they can serve public health needs (reaching out to students on email, social media, etc. in order to be accessible & informational), exploring how can students use apps, websites when the center isn’t open.

• Holistic comprehensive student-centered care the goal.

• Big challenge: seeing rise in number of students traveling abroad, what does that mean to prep students medically (safety, vaccines, etc.) for this travel?

Other business tabled, as meeting ran out of time.

In attendance:

• Samuel Masinter, Associate Vice President for College Relations, ex-officio
• Kristina Mereigh, Associate Associate Director of Health Services, ex officio
• Matthew Motyka, Controller, ex-officio
• Francisco Ortiz, Interim Chief of Police, ex-officio
• Laura Rauscher, Director of Disability Services
• Jonathan Gosnell (2019)
• Irene Rodriguez Martin; co-chair
• Lucy Mule (2019)
• Jennifer Blackburn, Poetry Center (2019)
• Danielle Brown, Development (2019)
• Michael Ireland, Student Financial Services (2020); co-chair
• Karen Sise, Registrar’s Office (2018)
• Jessica Feinberg ’18
• Katya Garcia-Israel ’20
• Andrea Hutter, Ada Cabinet representative
• Toula Sierros ’20, Sophomore Class President
• Rosalie Toupin ’20, SGA Secretary
• Barbara Williams (Appointed by the Director of the Alumnae Association)
• Dennis Bidwell, City Councilor (Ward 2)
• Gary Heartwell
• Pamela McCarthy
• Kris Evans
• Kerry-Beth Garvey