



COUNSELING SERVICES
Student Health and Counseling Services
**“Enhancing Academic Success and Psychological Well-Being
through Multiple Treatment Modalities in College Counseling.”**
Treatment Outcome Assessment Report

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Choose One: Learning Outcome Assessment

Date of Assessment Implementation: February 2013

Date of Report: August 2013

Purpose of Assessment: To examine the effectiveness of psychological treatment by comparing single and multiple modalities of treatment in college counseling.

Division Learning Outcome: Self-Determination

Targeted Learning Outcomes:

1. **Students who utilized individual or group counseling services will learn healthier coping skills and report lower level of personal and academic distress.**
2. Students who experience different clinical presentations respond better to specific treatment modalities over others.

Assessment Methodology

The Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS) is an assessment instrument developed by counseling center staff and researchers to assess eight key domains of college students' mental health: Depression, Generalized Anxiety, Social Anxiety, Academic Distress, Eating Concerns, Family Distress, Hostility, and Substance Use. The CCAPS allows us to compare our department treatment outcomes to a national database comprised of 120 college counseling centers nationwide. There are 2 versions of the CCAPS---the longer version (CCAPS-62) was administered to all students entering treatment at the Counseling Center to obtain a baseline measure of their initial psychological distress, and the shorter version of CCAPS (CCAPS-34) was administered at the termination of treatment. Comparing the changes between the baseline and the termination data provides valuable information on the treatment outcome and effectiveness.

Results

Based on the CCAPS scores, students who utilized individual or group therapy services at the counseling center reported symptom improvement in depression, generalized anxiety, social anxiety and academic distress when comparing the pre- and post- measures on the departmental and on the national levels.

- **Depression= -.66**
- **Generalized Anxiety= -.66**
- **Social Anxiety= -.26**
- **Academic Distress= -.66**

*(Scores are based on the Center Standardized Difference Scores. These scores are expressed in standard deviations with “0”=average, +1= 1 standard deviation above the mean, etc.)

Comparing the CCAPS scores of students who indicated significant level of distress in depression, generalized anxiety, social anxiety, and academic distress, the effectiveness of each treatment modality varies based on the presenting issues:

For depression, students who utilized crisis services reported slightly higher symptom reduction (59%) than those who only utilized individual sessions (55%) or group therapy (55%).

For generalized anxiety, students who utilized crisis services reported slightly higher symptom reduction (36%) than those who only utilized individual (34%) or group therapy (31%).

For social anxiety, group therapy showed the highest symptom reduction (27%), compared to individual therapy (25%) and groups (19%).

For academic distress, individual and crisis therapies have the highest symptom reduction (both at 37%), while group therapy seemed to be less effective (26%).

Conclusion & Implications for Practice

Mental wellness is an important factor in students' academic success and graduation rates. The Counseling Services seeks to provide support, education and interventions to remove psychological barriers that could potentially impair students' ability to perform to their highest potential.

Based on this study, Cal Poly students have reported significant improvement in psychological and emotional functioning after they received services from the Counseling Services, including depression, generalized anxiety, social anxiety and academic distress. In fact, the CCAPS data indicated that the post-test scores after receiving treatment at the Cal Poly Counseling Services were better than the national average across all areas.

Our study also examined the effectiveness of each treatment modality on the specific presenting symptoms and has found differences in treatment outcomes. These results are important in service planning and groups formulation, so that services will be adapted to directly address the various presenting problems with the most effective treatment modality. This is particularly important in a short-term model where most college counseling centers operate.