



POLICY TITLE: **Student Mental Health Policy**

POLICY CATEGORY: ACADEMIC

POLICY NUMBER: A22

POLICY OWNER: Alex Irwin – Director, Student Well-Being and Support

POLICY APPROVER: College Management Committee (CMC)

APPROVAL DATE: 1/20/2025

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/31/2025

REVIEW PERIOD: Every 5 Years

REVIEWED: N/A Click or tap to enter a date.

REVISED: N/A Click or tap to enter a date.

## 1. Purpose

This policy affirms George Brown College's commitment to supporting and promoting student mental health and well-being. The policy aligns with the Ontario government's *Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act (2024)* and the *Minister's Student Mental Health Directive (2024)*, and outlines the College's principles, programs, roles, and responsibilities in fostering a healthy and inclusive learning environment.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled at George Brown College, as well as faculty, staff, and other campus community members involved in supporting student mental health and well-being, including through teaching and service delivery.

## 3. Definition of Terms

- **Mental Health:** A cognitive state of well-being in which individuals can realize their potential, cope with normal stresses, work productively, and contribute to their community.
- **Whole Campus Approach:** A strategy that engages the entire campus community—students, faculty, staff, and external partners—in prioritizing mental health and well-being.
- **Culturally Responsive:** Services and practices that respect and integrate students' diverse cultural backgrounds, identities, and experiences.
- **National Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students:** A set of guidelines providing a framework to promote mental health and well-being across post-secondary institutions in Canada.

## 4. Policy

### 4.1. Commitment to Student Well-Being

The College is dedicated to fostering a supportive environment that aligns with the *National Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students*. This commitment involves integrating mental health into all aspects of campus life and ensuring that all students have access to appropriate resources and support.

### 4.2. Community Well-Being/Whole Campus Approach

The College recognizes that promoting mental health requires a collaborative effort involving students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders. The whole-campus approach ensures a shared responsibility for mental health and well-

being, fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where every member of the campus contributes to a culture of care.

### **4.3. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

The College is committed to ensuring that mental health resources are equitable, inclusive, and accessible to all students, including those from equity-deserving communities. Full participation, and equitable treatment of all students is a priority for the College, especially for those who have been traditionally underrepresented.

### **4.4. Culturally Responsive**

The College is committed to ensuring that mental health services are inclusive, equitable, and free from cultural bias, allowing students to feel safe, respected, and understood when accessing these supports. Mental health supports and services will be designed and delivered in ways that acknowledge, respect, and affirm the diverse cultural identities, values, and experiences of students.

### **4.5. Privacy and Confidentiality**

The College shall ensure the privacy of students accessing mental health services in accordance with internal policies and procedures and as required by statutory and regulatory privacy obligations. Information will only be shared with informed consent or as permitted or required by law. Student records will be securely disposed of in accordance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements to protect student privacy.

### **4.6. Data-Informed**

The College is committed to using evidence to guide mental health initiatives, ensuring that programs and services are effective and responsive to the evolving needs of students. The College shall provide opportunities for voluntary student feedback and input on mental health services and programs through surveys and other quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

### **4.7. College Student Mental Health Programs, Services, and Supports (see Appendix 1)**

The College offers accessible and evidence-based mental health services, including:

- Individual and group counselling, including urgent and same-day services.
- Peer wellness-focused support programs.
- Mental health awareness campaigns and resilience workshops.
- Partnerships with external mental health organizations for community-based referrals, and for crisis and specialized care.

### **4.8. Academic Accommodations**

Students with mental health-related needs can request academic accommodations through the Accessible Learning Services department. These accommodations are tailored to ensure equal access to education without compromising academic integrity.

#### **4.9. Training and Awareness**

Faculty, staff, and student leaders will receive ongoing training to recognize, respond to, and support students facing mental health challenges.

#### **4.10. Community Partnerships**

The College collaborates with community mental health organizations to enhance the resources available to students, ensuring a comprehensive approach to care.

### **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **5.1 Board of Governors**

- Ensure institutional compliance with the Strengthening Accountability and Student Supports Act (2024).
- Review and approve mental health strategies and policies.

#### **5.2 College Leadership**

- Establish and support policies, strategies, programs, and resources that foster a healthy campus environment.
- Allocate funding for mental health services, training staff, ensuring access to counseling and crisis intervention, and cultivating a culture of inclusivity and wellness.
- Collect student feedback to inform service and program improvements.
- Ensure compliance with legal and ethical standards related to student well-being.

#### **5.3 Faculty/Staff**

- Foster a supportive and inclusive environment conducive to student mental health and well-being.
- Participate in mental health training to recognize and respond to students experiencing mental health challenges.
- Refer students to appropriate mental health resources and services.

#### **5.4 Students**

- Take steps to maintain their own mental health and seek assistance when needed.

- Contribute to a supportive campus culture by respecting and supporting peers.

## 6. Accountability and Compliance

As per the *Minister's Student Mental Health Directive (2024)*, George Brown College will provide the Board of Governors with an annual report on the implementation and effectiveness of its student mental health policy in the preceding year. The report will be made publicly available on the dedicated webpage and submitted to the Minister by January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, beginning January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026 via [psepolicy@ontario.ca](mailto:psepolicy@ontario.ca).

The College will review this policy at least once every five years to ensure alignment with legislative requirements and best practices. The review and amendment process will include consultation with representatives of the College community, including a diverse selection of students as well as input from faculty and staff.

## 7. References

Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2020). *National standard for mental health and well-being for post-secondary learners*. <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/what-we-do/children-and-youth/studentstandard/>

Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities. (2024). *Strengthening Accountability and Learner Supports Act*. <https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-166>.

## 8. Appendix

Appendix 1: Links to College student mental health supports

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **LINKS TO COLLEGE STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS**

[Accessible Learning Services](#)

[Counselling and Student Well-Being](#)

[Locations](#)

[Groups](#)

[Crisis Resources](#)

[Taking Care of your mental health](#)

[Getting help off campus](#)

[Accessing Healthcare as a Student](#)

[Wellness videos](#)

[Other Resources/Self-Care](#)

[Counselling and Confidentiality](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Peer Mentor +](#)