Concurrent Enrollment Tool Kit, Week 11: Anxiety and Stress

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Time Frame 10 minutes

Essential Question(s)

- Help students recognize the signs of stress and anxiety.
- Discuss with students strategies for managing stress and anxiety.

Summary

Week 11 of the Concurrent Enrollment Tool Kit is designed to assist students in recognizing the signs of stress and anxiety. In addition, you will share with students ways they can manage their stress and anxiety.

Learning Goals

Begin the meeting by greeting the student by name and inquiring about how their classes are going, specifically inquiring about the student's workload and activities that take up their daily routine. Ask the student how they are feeling physically, mentally, and emotionally at this point in the semester or if they are feeling stressed or anxious. Assure them that feelings of stress and anxiety are normal and there are ways to manage them.
Discuss the ways they already try to manage stress and anxiety and evaluate if they are working well. If they are not, suggest other methods of managing these feelings. If you feel that the student's stress or anxiety is beyond what is typical, recommend that the student seek professional help from the university's counseling center or their doctor.
Before closing the meeting, check with the student to make sure they have no outstanding questions or concerns.

Attachments

- CE Tool Kit, Week 11.docx
- CE Tool Kit, Week 11.pdf

Materials

- CE Tool Kit, Week 11 (attached)

Topic Focus

How do you recognize and manage anxiety and stress?

Anxiety and stress can manifest in different ways. Signs of anxiety and stress can be physical, mental, or emotional. Physical symptoms can include stomachaches and headaches, while a mental sign could be difficulty focusing. Emotional signs of anxiety and stress include crying easily or feeling angry. Feelings of anxiety and stress are normal and can be managed in different ways.

When managing stress and anxiety there are many methods that can help. The best solution is for students to discover what helps them personally. This can be taking care of themselves physically by getting enough rest, eating well, or exercising. The student can also participate in an activity that they enjoy, like listening to music or hanging out with friends.

Discussion Starters

Consider starting the discussion by asking:

- How are you feeling about your concurrent enrollment course?
- Have you felt overwhelmed or anxious about anything?
- Do you think you are successful in managing these feelings?

Discussion Questions

To guide this week's discussion, consider asking some of the following questions:

- What do you do when you feel stressed or anxious?
- Do you feel as though you are taking care of yourself physically?
- What are some activities you enjoy doing? Let's make a list.
- How do you calm yourself down when you feel overwhelmed?

Next Steps

To prepare for next week, ask students to:

- Take some time to take care of themselves.
- Bring their My Goal handout from Week 1.

Research Rationale

Research shows a clear and strong link between concurrent enrollment and increased student academic performance (Jones, 2014; Dingess, 2018). Several studies have also found that students who participate in concurrent enrollment have time to acclimate to the college environment and thus earn higher grades in their postsecondary careers (Allen & Dadgar, 2012; Dingess, 2018). This opportunity to build momentum also provides an avenue for those students who might carry complex social and educational challenges from high school as they transition into the university setting (Wang et al., 2015). A consistent concern with students as they transition from high school to PSE is that many of them might have difficulty in fully acclimating to the rigor and expectations of university-level coursework (Taylor, 2015; Vargas et al., 2017). This is especially apparent when looking at students who identify as first-generation college students, as they might feel overwhelmed by everything from student support to the specifics of financial aid (Lee et al., 2022). Concurrent enrollment offers a bridge between the familiarity of high school and the frontier of higher learning, building on the initial benefits of concurrent enrollment in high school to build toward greater academic momentum fueled by a smooth transition from high school to university (Wang et al., 2015).

To expand on the inherent benefits associated with concurrent enrollment programs, these programs are most successful when students are provided with extra guidance in how to navigate this new academic environment (Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). Though students in concurrent enrollment programs might be high-performing, it is helpful to remember that they are still high school students and stand to benefit from “wraparound” services that counselors can provide as a bridge between high school and university-level expectations (Witkowsky & Clayton, 2020). Whether partnering directly with specific higher education institutions as part of the concurrent enrollment program or not, wraparound services can still be designed with the university course expectations in mind.

These tool kits are designed as conversation starters to provide the kind of ongoing support that allows concurrent enrollment students to be most successful (Johnson et al., 2021; Lile et al., 2018). Spanning a range of topics between goal setting and writing expectations, each conversation serves as an opportunity for relationship building and mentoring with students. For students who might not know which questions to ask or which resources to look for, these tool kits can help concurrent enrollment coordinators set a foundation for success for students to draw on after high school.

Resources

Allen, D., & Dadgar, M. (2012). Does dual enrollment increase students' success in college? Evidence from a quasi-experimental analysis of dual enrollment in New York City. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 11-19.

Dingess, E. (2018). The impact of the number of dual enrollment credits on racial minority students' completion time at five Virginia community colleges. ODU Digital Commons. https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/efl_etds/68

Johnson, J. M., Paris, J. H., Curci, J. D., & Horchos, S. (2021). Beyond college access: An exploration of the short-term impact of a dual enrollment program. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory, & Practice*, 1–23.

Jones, S. (2014). Student participation in dual enrollment and college success. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, *38*(1), 24-37.

Lee, J., Fernandez, F., Ro, H. K., & Suh, H. (2022, January 4). Does dual enrollment influence high school graduation, college enrollment, choice, and persistence? *Research in Higher Education, 63*, 825-848. https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s11162-021-09667-3.pdf

Lile, J. R., Ottusch, T. M., Jones, T., & Richards, L. N. (2017). Understanding college-student roles: Perspectives of participants in a high school/community college dual-enrollment program. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 42*(2), 95–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2016.1264899

Taylor, J. L. (2015). Accelerating pathways to college: The (in)equitable effects of community college dual credit. *Community College Review, 43*(4), 355-379. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552115594880

Vargas, J., Hooker, S., & Gerwin, C. (2017, November 1). Blending high school and college can sharpen the focus of each. *Phi Delta Kappan, 99*(3), 13-18.

Wang, X., Chan, H., Phelps, L. A., & Washbon, J. I. (2015). Fuel for success: Academic momentum as a mediator between dual enrollment and educational outcomes of two-year technical college students. *Community College Review, 43*(2), 165–190. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552115569846

Witkowsky, P., & Clayton, G. (2020). What makes dual enrollment work? High school counselor perspectives. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice, 44*(6), 427-444.