

Behavioral Healthcare Undergraduate Program

5-year Marketing Plan and Strategy (2018-2022)



Behavioral Healthcare Undergraduate Program
Department of Mental Health Law and Policy
College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
University of South Florida
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission:

The mission of the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy (MHLP) is to promote the health and quality of life of people with mental and substance use disorders by creating, evaluating, disseminating and translating state-of-the art knowledge to support effective practice across behavioral health and criminal justice systems.

Undergraduate Studies in Behavioral Health

The undergraduate programs are designed for students interested in pursuing careers in the behavioral health field. Programs include a B.S. in Behavioral Healthcare and two minors: a Minor in Behavioral Healthcare, and a Minor in Forensic Behavioral Health, both of which can be taken in conjunction with any undergraduate major. The Minor in Behavioral Healthcare has proven particularly beneficial to students majoring in disciplines such as health sciences, psychology, gerontology, criminology, nursing, social work, and sociology.

By combining academic and experiential learning, the undergraduate programs provide students with information and practical experience that is applicable to immediately work in the field. Students completing the Minor are placed in community agencies to learn about recovery-oriented programs for persons with a mental illness or an addictive disorder. The academic program has proven useful for students planning to attend graduate school, as well as those planning to work in the behavioral health field after graduation.

Overview:

This marketing plan was developed to inform and direct the activities to promote the Behavioral Healthcare major offered by the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy (“the Department”; “MHLP”) in the University of South Florida’s College of Behavioral and Community Sciences (“the College”, “CBCS”). The states the audiences that will be targeted or recruitment and identifies strategies for fundraising and awareness building.

The plan is based on feedback provided by the College, as well as MHLP departmental faculty, staff, students and was developed with consultation from marketing professionals within the College and the Department. The goals and tactics identified within were developed in line with the strategic plans and vision of the University of South Florida, College of Behavioral Health and Social Sciences, and the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy. The marketing plan aims to: a) increase brand awareness of the Department and academic program, b) encourage pride in and inspire greater association with the Department and academic program for current and prospective students, faculty, staff, university partners, and community partners.

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Goals

The goals in the promotion of the new Behavioral Healthcare major between spring of 2018 and spring 2022 are:

1. To increase the brand awareness of the Behavioral Healthcare degree program, locally and nationally.
2. To advance the perception of the Behavioral Healthcare degree program as an appealing, state-of-the-art program that generates research and prepares students to become professionals in tangible and available careers in the behavioral healthcare field.
3. To increase recruitment and retention of academically qualified students who represent the diversity of the University of South Florida and professions in behavioral healthcare.
4. To position the Behavioral Healthcare major as a unique program that offers excellent career preparation, student satisfaction, and graduation rates.
5. To ensure the availability and distribution of consistent and accurate information, both within and outside of the University, that portrays the Behavioral Healthcare major as a rising and engaging program open to students of diverse backgrounds,
6. To acquire funds for scholarship programs for students support students financially.
7. To build awareness of the Behavioral Healthcare major in the community with businesses and organizations related to healthcare.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

The University of South Florida is a successful institution with strong research programs campus wide, ranking 45th in the United States in research expenditures.¹

The College of Behavioral and Community Sciences was developed from and houses the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Institute, which conducts research, develops literature on best practices in the behavioral healthcare field, and is one of the largest behavioral health research and training institutes in the nation

The College of Behavioral and Community Sciences has 17 specialized research centers and institutes currently established and conducts many training events every year to disseminate best practices in the professional community, cultivating relationships with researchers and professionals across the nation and globe.

The College of Behavioral and Community Sciences and the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy has strong relationships with successful community, state, and national initiatives.

The Mental Health Law and Policy Department is home to many nationally and internationally recognized researchers who are teaching in the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate degree program. The Department acquired over \$13 million in contracted external funding in the 2015-2016 fiscal year

Faculty in the Mental Health Law and Policy Department have access to five Certified Research Administrators (CRA-USF) and the Department boasts award-winning faculty and staff with consistent news mentions.

The Behavioral Healthcare major is a unique interdisciplinary program that combines research and academic study to prepare students for a range of careers in behavioral healthcare. It features concentrations in adult community services, behavioral health research, applied behavior analysis, and children's mental health for personalization of study.

Students in the Behavioral Healthcare major are exposed to current best practices and developing research while studying, and have the opportunity to engage in undergraduate research for hands-

¹ National Science Foundation, "NSF – NCSES Academic Institution Profiles – Rankings by Total R&D Expenditures."

on experience. The Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program also provides internship opportunities to students during their enrollment. During the 2016-2017 academic school years, 97 students were placed, culminating in approximately 11,640 hours of practical learning experience and service to the community². Many of these students go on to acquire positions at their placement sites.

The Behavioral Healthcare major places interested students in a context to aid in research programs benefitting students, researchers, and the college.

² USF College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, "College of Behavioral and Community Sciences - Annual Report: 2016-2017."

Weaknesses

The College of Behavioral and Community Sciences is one of the less well-known colleges in the USF System, possibly leading to a lack of awareness of the Behavioral Healthcare academic program.

The Behavioral Healthcare major is still fairly new program and remains the only program of its kind in the United States. There is no current “successful” undergraduate model of its kind to emulate and the program is unable to reap the benefits of programmatic consistency typically associated with established academic programs (i.e., brand recognition, history of awareness and interest in the program by students etc.). The Mental Health Law and Policy Department continues to adjust to housing an undergraduate major within a previously primarily research-focused department.

The Behavioral Healthcare major lacks a strategy and process for collecting data from prospective students, current students, and alumni regarding how students learn about and discover the program, student’s impression of the program, and student success after graduation from the program.

The Behavioral Healthcare major’s organizational website on Canvas (USF’s learning management system) currently lacks visual appeal, easily navigable content, and is underutilized in comparison to other major’s within the College and University. This may present as a loss opportunity for communication to current majors regarding opportunities, announcement, events, and sources of academic assistance within the program.

The Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program lacks a robust web and social media engagement. The “Students” section of the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy’s departmental website Behavioral Healthcare Major occasionally hosts inaccurate, out-of-date, or confusing information. Information about the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy and the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program is currently not regularly featured on social media platforms that may attract students to and inform prospective and current students about the academic program.

Competition with departments within the college and with psychology, sociology, and medical departments at USF for students may interfere with students declaring as Behavioral Healthcare majors. The visibility of these programs may interfere with recruitment of potential students.

Competition with other universities in Florida who have programs in similar or related fields, such as the University of Florida (Family, Youth and Community Sciences; and Health Education and

Behavior majors), Florida State University (Mental Health Counseling; Sociology of Aging and Health; and Applied Social Research majors) may interfere with recruitment efforts.

Opportunities

The Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program offers a unique opportunity to build the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences' and the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy's brand as a cultivator of researchers and professionals in the behavioral healthcare field.

The Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program can help generate funds for the Mental Health Law and Policy Department by raising awareness for its community and professional initiatives.

Increased awareness about the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences and remarkable work conducted by the faculty in the Department of Mental Health Law and policy provide prime opportunities for the Behavioral Healthcare Major to enhance awareness of its existence and attract students.

Through the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, students have access to a structured Weekly Staff Newsletter/Semester Alumni Newsletter. Through this medium, the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program has an opportunity to improve awareness of its presence and highlight achievements of faculty, students, and alumni associated with the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy and the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program.

The Department of Mental Health Law and Policy and the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program may boost their social media presence, web presence, and therefore brand positioning by increasing content on the current Facebook and YouTube pages associated with and hosted by the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences. Dedicated marketing staff members within the College and the Department are available to assist with these efforts.

Both the Behavioral Healthcare major and minors are suitable augments to many other majors external to and within the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences.

The Department of Mental Health Law and Policy and the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program currently has access to the survey tools (i.e., USF Qualtrics) and student databases necessary to create and collect data from prospective students, current students, and alumni regarding how students learn about and discover the program, student's impression of the program, and student success after graduation from the program.

The Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program, in collaboration with marketing and other university officials may initiate a targeted marketing campaign to high school seniors, transfer students, and recent community college graduates with excellent qualifications, to inform them about and encourage them to consider the Behavioral Healthcare major.

Several surrounding community colleges and smaller institutions that feed into the USF System feature related programs that would prepare students to engage in the Behavioral Healthcare major.

The University of South Florida hosts several events and is home to multiple departments, offices, and associated personnel who are responsible for helping and connecting with prospective students who are incoming freshmen, transfers, undecided, or are considering major reselection. Establishing relationships and ensuring a presence at events are an opportunity to grow awareness of and interest in the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program.

Threats

Additional demands placed on the faculty/staff associated with housing an academic program within the Department of Mental Health Law and Policy include marketing the major, ensuring alignment with state, university, and college ensuring consistent programming, preempting programmatic problems, and preempting and managing extra-curricular and curricular concerns related to student progress (i.e., academic difficulties, progress to graduation, personal problems, professionalism, etc.), which may require more attention than current faculty/staff effectively can manage, when considering the other responsibilities associated with their positions and professional progress.

The nature of the Behavioral Healthcare major may lead interested students to pursue study in other fields, such as psychology and sociology. Established majors on the USF campus may pull Behavioral Healthcare students away from their program.

Incoming students may tend to gravitate towards departments within and external to the College, for example Psychology, Sociology, or Social Work, which are more well-known and have more consistent brand awareness, than an emerging major such a Behavioral Healthcare.

Students may not readily understand or be aware of the differences between or benefits of choosing to pursue a degree in Behavioral Healthcare over similar but more familiar degree programs.

As the Mental Health Law and Policy Department continues to adjust to housing an undergraduate major within a previously primarily research-focused department, students may express frustration with programmatic changes; feel disconnected from the department, the major, and other students, and may be at risk for declaring another major.

Other or newer academic programs at USF may have higher social media outreach and engagement than the Behavioral Healthcare Undergraduate program.

Target Markets: Research and Considerations

Identified Target Markets

1. High school juniors and seniors (Prospective college freshmen)
2. First time freshmen (FTIC)
3. Community college transfer students
4. Non-traditional students
5. Diverse student body at USF

High school juniors and seniors (Prospective college freshmen)

The spring semester of junior year and the beginning of the fall semester of senior are critical times for high school students as it relates to preparing for applying to college. *Most high school students take the SAT and the ACT for the first time in the spring semester of junior year, and many take the SATs again in the fall of their senior year.³ Students also begin engaging in the research process for adding colleges to the list of schools to which they will ultimately apply during this time.*⁴

Students overwhelmingly reported a preference for traditional mail and email as acceptable methods of first contact during their college search process. *Approximately 77% and 71% of students reported a preference for traditional mailings and emails, respectively, as a method of first contact when they were in this stage of the college application process.⁵*

Sending text messages, communicating via online chats/skype, or contacting students via social media were generally considered unacceptable – less than 25% of students indicated these tactics as appropriate methods of first contact and over 45% of students reported they would find inappropriate for a school to contact them through any form of social media.⁶

In terms of effectiveness, 52.2% of students and 37% of students who were unfamiliar with a school and had received unrequested communications found traditional mailings and email as the most effective medium for compelling them to apply to that institution.⁷

Ensuring that the publications received are well matched to the student's interests and characteristics is also critical. When students feel an institution is well-matched to their interests and preferences, the likelihood of engaging in more research about that institution

³ Princeton Review, "When Should You Take the SAT or ACT?"

⁴ Stamats Market Research, "Stamats 2016 TeensTalk® Survey," 13.

⁵ Stamats Market Research, 27.

⁶ Stamats Market Research, 26, 27.

⁷ Stamats Market Research, 24.

school or adding the school to their application list increases.⁸

When to high school juniors and seniors are judging whether the school is a good fit and the schools institutional quality, certain factors appear to matter more than others. *In order, from most to least important, high school seniors and juniors reported the following factors as the top 10 most important when deciding which institutions to place on their consideration lists:*

1. Offers the intended major
2. Potential to succeed at the school
3. Reputation for quality education
4. Merit based Financial Aid
5. The Feel of being on Campus (especially important for high school seniors)
6. Cost of Tuition, Fees, Room, and Board
7. Need Based Financial Aid
8. Probability of Being Admitted
9. Professional preparation
10. Graduates' Success⁹

* Location of the school was reported as the 11th important factor when considering institutional quality and fit.¹⁰

The top five "offline resources" for hearing about colleges that students eventually researched, where the percentages represent the percentage of students who reported using this resource, were:

1. Traditional Mailings (53.4%),
2. Suggestions by family or a friend (46.3%)
3. College fairs (40.7%)
4. Having a family member who attended (32.9%)
5. Having a friend who attended (29.1%)¹¹

⁸ Stamats Market Research, 13.

⁹ Stamats Market Research, 16.

¹⁰ Stamats Market Research.

¹¹ Stamats Market Research, 14.

The *top five “online resources” for hearing about the colleges that students eventually researched*, where the percentages represent the percentage of students who reported using this resource:

1. College search sites (e.g., Princeton Review, Cappex, College Week Live; 71.1%),
2. College Board (i.e., the administrator of the SAT and PSAT; 62.9%),
3. Search engines (59.9%),
4. US News and World Report (26.2%),
5. Facebook (20.1%)¹²

First Time Freshmen (FTIC)

Although they may have been attracted by the programs and options offered when selecting a university, first time freshmen do not always declare their majors immediately. As a result, many first-time freshmen will enter the university undecided about their major.

Students reported their *top four preferred methods of contact by a school after they have been admitted* are email (~89%), traditional mailings (~79%), social media (~72%), and phone calls (~71%).¹³

Research shows *students gravitate towards majors that have the following characteristics*:

- Interest in the subject – particularly for incoming freshmen^{14 15}
- Quality faculty, particularly in the introductory courses¹⁶
- Potential for career advancement¹⁷
- Potential for job opportunities¹⁸
- Quality of academics/Intellectual Curiosity^{19 20}

Undeclared students are likely to benefit from assistance with identifying their interests and planning their course of study. It will be important to portray the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program as compelling, empowering, enjoyable, and productive towards a lucrative and stable career. This may be achieved by promoting opportunities to personalize student courses

¹² Stamats Market Research, 15.

¹³ Stamats Market Research, 27.

¹⁴ Soria and Stebleton, “Major Decisions.”

¹⁵ Malgwi, Howe, and Burnaby, “Influences on Students’ Choice of College Major.”

¹⁶ Chambliss and Takacs, *How College Works*.

¹⁷ Malgwi, Howe, and Burnaby, “Influences on Students’ Choice of College Major.”

¹⁸ Soria and Stebleton, “Major Decisions”; Leach and Patall, “Maximizing and Counterfactual Thinking in Academic Major Decision Making.”

¹⁹ Ketonen et al., “Am I in the Right Place?”

²⁰ Soria and Stebleton, “Major Decisions.”

of study, gain hands-on experience, and identifying students targeting students with interest in helping processions.

Considerations

- Nationally, 8.6 percent of freshmen at Baccalaureate Institutions reported their intended major was “Undecided”²¹
- USF offers a Transitional Advising Center, which offers a specialized course (i.e., U-Decide SLS 1101) intended to assist students with career and major decision-making, as well as their transition to USF. This is a required course for FTIC students who are undeclared during their first year of enrollment at USF.
- 2,552 new freshmen entered USF Tampa in fall 2017^{22 23}

Community College Transfers

Students who transfer into universities from community colleges are typically more informed than first-time freshmen and are most concerned about continuing on their current career path, focus on specific programs, and prefer convenience. *Community college transfers are an important and viable target market. Since convenience is cited as a major factor in decisions of these students, prospective students in a 60-mile radius will be targeted.*

Considerations

- 3,806 new transfer students entered USF Tampa in fall 2017.
- The majority of transfer students (66%, N=2518) come from the Florida College System.
- The highest number of transfer students in the USF System and USF Tampa come from Hillsborough Community College.²⁴
- Significant numbers of transfer students come from St. Petersburg College (SPC), State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota (SCF). HCC and SCF both have concentrations in social and behavioral sciences.
- St. Petersburg College, Pasco-Hernando Community College (PHCC), and Polk State College feature Associate of Science degrees that would prepare students for the Behavioral Healthcare major, as well as strong nursing and medical programs where potential students may study.
- PHCC also has programs in human services.

²¹ Eagan et al., “The American Freshman: National Norms 2016.”

²² University of South Florida, “USF Factbook 2017.”

²³ Hanover Research, “2016 Trends in Higher Education Marketing, Enrollment, and Technology.”

²⁴ University of South Florida, “USF Factbook 2017.”

Non-traditional students

Non-traditional students are unique, but have commonly found characteristics: has delayed enrollment (did not enter college in the same year as high school completion), attends school part time, works full time while enrolled, is considered financially independent for financial aid eligibility purposes, has dependents other than a spouse, is a single parent, does not have a high school diploma (GED, other certification, did not finish high school).²⁵

Nearly three-quarters of all undergraduate students have at least one characteristic of a non-traditional student, largely due to the rise in part-time enrollment. The level at which a student is nontraditional can be considered a continuum based on how many of these characteristics are present. Approximately 21% of all USF students attend part-time.²⁶

Diverse student body at USF

Diversity in this context refers to minorities and cultural diversity present at USF. USF is “committed to the principle of equal education and employment opportunities” campus wide, and emphasizes respect for personal dignity. The nature of the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate degree program and its support for diverse populations as a profession, we will employ a messaging strategy that is sensitive and open to students of all races, religions, sexual orientations, and disabilities.

Considerations

- USF Tampa is ethnically diverse and is made up of the following demographics:
 - 20% Hispanic
 - 11% African American
 - 7.5% Asian
 - 84 American Indian students, 69 Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 - 1484 students identify as 2 or more races
 - 6% of the student population at USF Tampa is made up of international students (n=2003).²⁷

Students have reported the following factors, listed from least to most important, as influential in making the decision to change their major:

1. Interest in the subject
2. Career and job opportunities

²⁵ National Center for Education Statistics, “Nontraditional Undergraduates / Definitions and Data.”

²⁶ University of South Florida, “USF Factbook 2017.”

²⁷ University of South Florida.

3. High level of compensation
4. Introductory courses
5. Discussion with other students²⁸

These factors must be taken into consideration when both recruiting new students and retaining the students that are currently enrolled in the undergraduate program.

²⁸ Malgwi, Howe, and Burnaby, "Influences on Students' Choice of College Major."

Marketing Strategy and Activities

General Statement on Branding Efforts

All efforts to brand and market the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program are *intended to position the program as a nationally competitive program designed to prepare students for immediate careers and further study*. All verbiage and imagery used to promote the program should be unique and appealing to prospective students. Although the University is likely to benefit from the solicitation of students inherent in the process of inspiring interest in the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program, as the program is housed within the University, efforts to brand and market the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program are not and will not be designed to “sell the university”. Rather *the purpose of our branding efforts is to solicit and attract students to the Behavioral Undergraduate program*. Because our intentions are: a) to persuade prospective students that the opportunities available within Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program are relevant to them and distinct, and b) to attract and retain high quality students to the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program, the strategies utilized and information disseminated to different target audience may vary.²⁹

Strategy 1: Postal Mailings

Postal mailings are generally considered the most effective way to target high school students, it is necessary to develop packages to mail to targeted populations.³⁰

Considerations for Mailings

- All imagery in mailings should represent diverse populations of students and faculty.
- Letters addressed to students should be personalized, and should include student names and not “Dear Student.” Envelopes and packages should be addressed to the individual student.
- Data should be tracked as much as possible.
- Mailings should be conducted to ensure that the Behavioral Healthcare package is one of the first received when possible. This can be done by keeping abreast of mailing dates for other colleges and programs.

Target Population: High School Juniors and Seniors

Based on the aforementioned research, postal mailings to promising students with interests in helping fields would be the most appropriate and acceptable way of introducing prospective students to the Behavioral Healthcare major.

²⁹ Identifying and Cultivating Secondary Target Audiences

³⁰ Stamats Market Research, “Stamats 2016 TeensTalk® Survey.”

At the time of the ACT and SAT, high school juniors and seniors are given the option to opt-in to receiving information from universities and colleges based on their prospective college major interests. To target this population, mailing lists from College Board, ACT, NRCUA, and CBSS may be purchased. To further locate and target potential first-time freshmen, student referrals can be solicited from enrolled students, employees, alumni, and college databases twice a year (late fall and late spring).³¹

Marketing materials should highlight the following: success stories of our students (highlighting our students' ability to get jobs or entry into advanced education), our reputation for quality education, supports available within the department and college intended to assist them with succeeding in our program while at the school. Students could be offered be invited to tour the department so they can get a "feel" for the department and campus or for ease of access, a virtual tour of the department, faculty, students, and perhaps a classroom, may also be offered and displayed on the mailed materials.

The mailings should also include general language, as high school student may not be familiar with university jargon. They should include information about life at the University of South Florida, information about the College of Behavioral and Community Sciences, and a concise description of the Behavioral Healthcare major and its benefits.

Strategy 2: Email Campaign

Target Populations: High School Seniors, First Time Freshman & Community College Transfers

Research shows that that *once they are accepted to the university, email communication is students' most preferred method of contact*. A targeted email campaign to all promising incoming freshmen and incoming community college transfers who have declared an interest in or are arriving with Associate's degrees in mental health, medical sciences, and/or forensics will be implemented.

An invaluable opportunity to capture potential incoming students' attention is at USF's *Bulls-Unite* event- an event occurring every spring semester where students who have been accepted by the university, but have not yet enrolled, are invited to learn more about the campus and its offerings. *Sending a targeted announcement/FYI email in time with the Bulls-Unite announcement, which advertises the undergraduate program and informs*

³¹ Identifying and Cultivating Secondary Target Markets

students that the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program will have representation at the event, is a prime opportunity for recruitment into the undergraduate program.

Strategy 3: Advisor Outreach

Target Populations: All Target Markets

Academic advisors are an essential support for students in the process of making academic decisions. In order for advisors to have an informed discussion about and propose the Behavioral Healthcare major to their students, they must have aware of and knowledgeable about the program. *Therefore, materials similar to the email and traditional mail materials, which detail the program and highlight its students and successes, will be sent to advisors at the aforementioned community colleges and to high schools within a 60-mile radius of USF- Tampa.*

Advisors within the university play a critical role in assisting current students with making academic decisions while in college. *In order to target high school juniors and seniors, FTICs, community college transfers, non-traditional students, and the diverse body student body at USF, marketing materials (i.e. flyers, postcards) will be distributed to advisors and offices:*

- USF Psychology
- USF Health Sciences
- USF Undergraduate Studies
- USF Honors College
- USF Career Services Counselor for CBCS
- USF Academic Advocacy
 - Exploratory Curriculum Major Advisor
 - Major Reselection Advisor
- USF FUSE Advisor
 - FUSE provides students a “seamless transition” to USF institutions from the following community colleges in Florida - Hillsborough Community College, St. Petersburg College, College of Central Florida, Pasco – Hernando State College, Polk State College, South Florida State College, and State College of Florida³²
- USF Tampa Office of Admissions - Assistant Director of Campus Visits and Events
 - Visits high schools and attends college fairs all over the state (and occasionally outside the state) in an effort to recruit high school students to USF.

All materials sent to advisors will include an identifiable contact for the program. This provides advisors and potential students access to a person within the academic program from which they

³² USF Office of Admissions, “FUSE FAQ.”

can receive additional information and while also fostering a personal connection with the program. Following up and ongoing conversations with advisors within the USF system will be critical for maintaining a healthy relationship between these offices and the Behavioral Healthcare major.

Strategy 4: Community, Corporate, and Organizational Outreach

Target Populations: All Target Markets

Several organizations that specialize in behavioral healthcare should be informed of the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program and the research being conducted in the Mental Health Law and Policy department.

Community affiliates will be sent a package detailing the major and current research initiatives:

- A Women's Place
- ACTS
- Bay Area Youth Services
- Byrd Alzheimer's Institute
- Center for Girls
- DACCO
- Family Justice Center
- Federation of Families
- Hyde Park Counseling Center
- Mental Health Care, Inc.
- Metro Wellness
- Metropolitan Ministries
- Northside Behavioral Health
- PEMHS
- Project Return
- Success for Kids
- Suncoast Kid's Place

State and national affiliates should also be informed:

- National Institute of Mental Health
- National Institute of Health
- Mental Health America
- National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Veteran's Administration
- Pinellas Drug Court
- Hillsborough Drug Court
- Professional contacts of administration and faculty who work in mental and behavioral healthcare can also be given information (or solicited for recommendations).
- Local businesses that deal with behavioral healthcare will also be sent a package when contact is made.
- The educational community – organizations that specialize in behavioral healthcare education – will also be sent information. This will be a larger package with more

information about the course of study in the major, and a list of briefs on MHLP research initiatives.

Strategy 5: Student Organization Outreach

Target Populations: All Target Markets

Organizations that have contact with students will be targeted for recruitment purposes. Creating a relationship with those in the immediate area will have the most impact.

- *Summer Research Institute* – the SRI has contact with students invested in research who may also have interest in Behavioral Healthcare. Opportunities to disseminate information and speak to these students will be assessed. Any information given will be from the first-time freshmen package.
- *Upward Bound* – The Upward Bound program at USF offers academic support to students from low-income families to give them the best opportunities to succeed pre-college. These students are urged to look at programs and create goals. Any information given to them will come from the first-time freshmen package.
- *Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)* – The AVID program in Hillsborough County Public schools offers students with average to above-average performance and recognized potential to gain academic support with the goal of entering a college program. From middle school, they are urged to research colleges and potential programs and set attainable goals. AVID coordinators at local schools will be contacted to send information from and offer speaking opportunities for interested students.
- *Creation of a Behavioral Healthcare Student Ambassador Program* - A new initiative that has been proposed within the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program is the creation of a student organization/ student ambassador program. This program would provide opportunities for current student to engage in aforementioned outreach programs, provide content for videos that can be uploaded on social media/web based platforms (see [“Strategy 6”](#)) be act as ambassadors for the academic program at events (see [“Strategy 8”](#))

Strategy 6: Social Media and Web Communication

Current prospective students are stakeholders in the Behavioral Healthcare program, and their adoption of social media has forced many colleges to integrate Facebook, Twitter, and other

web-based platforms into their strategic marketing and recruitment plans. This is necessary to engage potential students and keep them informed.³³

Social media use to promote the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program will primarily consist of informational posting, but should also include media and posting of student content to showcase work done by students in the major. Similar content that is generated by or involving the faculty will also be submitted for posting. Information posted on social media that promotes the academic program and/or the department may come in video, audio (i.e., podcasts), pictorial (i.e., flyers, photos, etc.) or other digital forms.

Traffic and postings will be conducted primarily on Facebook and YouTube. *Creation of a hashtag (e.g., #USFBehavioralHealthcare, #USFBHC) and inclusion of the hashtag on marketing materials may assist with the proliferation of positive attention towards the undergraduate program.*

Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, & Snapchat*

*New/other networks will be evaluated as need and interest arises

- All videos displaying positive student impressions, student success, and faculty and departmental achievements should be submitted for posting to the CBCS Facebook page and other social platforms moderated by CBCS.
- Course flyers, undergraduate program information, and announcements regarding MHLP or the Behavioral Healthcare degree program should be posted promptly to the CBCS Facebook page and other social platforms moderated by CBCS.
- Research announcements and articles will be posted promptly upon release.
- Ensure that all videos created that show academic work, progress; student lifestyles, etc. are uploaded.
- Ensure that all videos have descriptions that are complete, concise, and accessible to the primary audience (students).
- Ensure that all comments to videos are viewed and answered in a timely manner or alternatively ensure that comments are disabled, but contact information linking the video to the departmental website are provided in the information section of the video.

³³ Re-Tooling Marketing For A New Generation

Departmental Website

On the Mental Health Law and Policy main page, *information on research conducted by Behavioral Healthcare faculty will be consistently updated. As possible, media including videos, course flyers, and student-created content should be uploaded and showcased to portray the lifestyle of a Behavioral Healthcare student.*

The core promotional video for the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program should:

- Showcase students in the major and minors.
- Show students in their classroom environments.
- Show students in research environments.
- Include current faculty in the video.
- Include current student dialogue about the program and the university.³⁴
- End with the MHLP web address and a contact email address that will ensure prompt response.

Canvas Learning Management System

Two of the top five factors influencing students to change their major are: 1) their experiences in introductory courses and 2) their discussions with other students. Considering these factors, it becomes clear that i.e., retention of current students as well as encouraging positive attitudes and perceptions about the undergraduate program within those students is a much a marketing tool as advertisements and campaigns.

To that end, *the Behavioral Healthcare major's organizational website on Canvas (USF's learning management system) will be consistently upgraded to improve its visual appeal, navigability, resourcefulness and utilization, to be on par with other majors within the College and University.* The intention will be to provide an opportunity for communication to current majors regarding opportunities, announcement, events, and sources of academic assistance within the program. By using this tool, we can engender a sense of connection and pride amongst students, who may then communicate this perception to friends and others who may be interested in the program.

Web-Based Advertising

College search sites (e.g., Princeton Review), College Board, search engines, US News and World Report, and Facebook (20.1%)³⁵ were listed as the top 5 utilized ways to search online

³⁴ TeensTALK™ Students Value Personal Connection when Choosing a College: prospective students find the experiences and opinions of current students to be highly effective when choosing a school/program.

³⁵ Stamats Market Research, "Stamats 2016 TeensTalk® Survey," 15.

about a particular university. *Therefore, the program would benefit from creating advertising accounts at the Princeton Review, College Review, Facebook, and US News and World Report websites. Furthermore, making sure the entries and links regarding the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program on these websites are accurate and up to date will be necessary.*

Strategy 7: Offline Communication

Student Relevant Media

Traditional media sources may also be used to target prospective students.

Ads may be placed in:

- Community college newspapers
- USF-specific feeder college newspapers
- High School Newspapers

These ads will need to be tailored to the identified target populations. This ad campaign can be conducted at key schools in a 60-mile radius.

Traditional Media

The traditional media, such as newspapers, local, and national online media outlets may be utilized to build awareness for the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program and the Mental Health Law and Policy initiatives as a whole.

- Faculty mentions in traditional media *should be promoted on the college and departmental website, the College's social media platform (e.g., CBCS Facebook page), and the College's newsletter (i.e., Communiqué).*
- As grants are acquired, research projects are completed, or community impacts are identified, local outlets that carry similar relevant news may be contacted for coverage, and links to faculty research *should be placed on the departmental website and the college's social media platforms, and announced in CBCS's newsletter, Communiqué.*
- Links to all news stories published by other outlets *should be linked to the departmental website, placed on the college's social media platforms (e.g., CBCS Facebook page), and announced in CBCS's newsletter, Communiqué.*

Departmental Environment and Appearance

Word of mouth and sense of belonging are strong factors in influencing students to consider and remain in their respective academic program. Therefore, *the MHL department must provide an*

environment that is also student centered and encourages student interaction and belonging.

This will be accomplished in the following ways:

- Posting photos of current students engaging in research or other exciting endeavors (e.g., study abroad)
- Posting visually appealing, informative, and relevant content that:
 - Describes and promotes the undergraduate program (i.e., major, minor, and concentrations)
 - Provides information on events occurring in the department, college, university, or community that would be relevant to our students
 - Provides job postings or spotlights on careers related to Behavioral Healthcare,
 - Spotlights faculty, student, and/or alumni achievements
 - Displays potential career or academic paths
 - Displays opportunities that may be of interest to our students and promote endeavors that are ancillary to the undergraduate program (i.e., study abroad programs, scholarships, etc.)

Strategy 8: Events

Types of events that will help raise awareness for the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program include:

Awareness Events

Awareness events will be aimed at raising awareness about the undergraduate degree program. Outreach to parents, alumni, faculty, community and professional organizations, and corporations will help create attention towards the program.

Awareness events could also function as a source of fund generation for the development of a Behavioral Healthcare Scholarship fund, intended to provide financial assistance to our students.

- Parents and Alumni: Solicitation of donations, success stories, and/or representation at events.
- Community and Professional Organizations: Outreach to build relationships with community affiliates and professional organizations that specialize or have interest in behavioral healthcare.
- Corporations: Relationships with corporations (pharmaceutical companies) can yield endowed scholarships and financial support for the program.

General Events

General events those that are open to the USF population and the public. These events are intended to promote awareness and interest in the undergraduate academic program and possibly raise funds for scholarship funds.

Athletic and other community events – The program can sponsor a 5K run or a bike ride/race on campus and raise funds through participation fees. The program can also encourage faculty to co-collaborate with community partners and other departments to sponsor programs (e.g., Community Health Improvement Initiative co-sponsored by MHLP faculty Kyaien Connor, Tampa Heights Community Center and USF Health)

Workshops – The program can work with the USF Counseling Center and/or the Marshall Student Center to sponsor workshops on mental health and addiction for students.

USF Bull Market – Occurs every Wednesday at USF in front of the Marshall Student Center. This is an exciting event where the College always has a table available for representation. Representatives from the program (i.e., student ambassadors, coordinators, and/or faculty) can use the opportunity to promote the undergraduate program and other events or programs occurring within the department (i.e., new courses, study abroad opportunities). Engagement in this event increases the visibility of the academic program to the entire USF student body.

USF Week of Welcome (“Week of WOW”) – The “Week of WOW”/“First Fifty Days” events occurs every year for the first 50 days of the academic school year. The event is intended to introduce, acclimate, and foster excitement in all students about the university and its offerings. The events (fairs – career/job fairs & major fairs, fun events – cookouts, concerts, game nights, pep rallies, community welcome vents) are opportunities for the undergraduate program to have a presence and representation. *Multiple university offices, academic programs, and organizations that the program could collaborate with to create or sponsor an event during the Week of WOW/First Fifty Days exist. Such participation will also guarantee representation in the widely distributed and eye-catching Week of WOW program book.*

- *Bulls-Unite*
 - Occurs every spring semester. Students who have been accepted by the university, but have not yet enrolled, are invited to learn more about the campus and its offerings. *Having representation at the event is a prime opportunity for recruitment into the undergraduate program.*

Other community events may also be attended by program representatives for promotion.

College Fairs

High school students find college fairs to be valuable in their search for information to help locate and choose schools³⁶.

When fairs are held, representatives – including staff, faculty or students – can attend to ensure that information is disseminated to interested students. These fairs include those internal to and sponsored by USF as well. Specific events at which there will be representation and specific resources within the university that engage in high school/college fair outreach include:

- *USF Stampede For Success* – Occurs every spring and fall at the USF Marshall Student Center. Advertised by the university and targeted to high school students in the beginning states of identifying colleges.
- *USF Tampa Office of Admissions - Assistant Director of Campus Visits and Events*- Visits high schools and attends college fairs all over the state (and occasionally outside the state) in an effort to recruit high school students to USF.
- *USF FUSE Advisor* - The USF FUSE advisor visits and acts as a liaison between USF and the community colleges in Florida listed below to provide students from those schools a “seamless transition” from their community college to USF.
 - Included community college: Hillsborough Community College, St. Petersburg College, College of Central Florida, Pasco – Hernando State College, Polk State College, South Florida State College, and State College of Florida

Strategy 9: Follow-up, Correspondence Responses, and Feedback

Students value a personal connection when soliciting information about a college program³⁷. Therefore, *implementation of each strategy and activity should include follow-up communications with interested and prospective students as well as tracking of students’ responses to the various marketing campaigns.* This is intended to inform the future marketing strategy and align the majority of our efforts and resources towards the strategies that provide the best yield.

³⁶ Odell, “College-Bound Teens Sound Off on Recruitment Process”; Stamats Market Research, “Stamats 2016 TeensTalk® Survey”; “TeensTALK 2016”; “TeensTALK™ Students Value Personal Connection When Choosing a College – Alaina Wiens.”

³⁷ Odell, “College-Bound Teens Sound Off on Recruitment Process”; Odell; Stamats Market Research, “Stamats 2016 TeensTalk® Survey”; “TeensTALK 2016”; “TeensTALK™ Students Value Personal Connection When Choosing a College – Alaina Wiens.”

A consistent personal connection is also helpful when working with individuals internal to the university who act as liaisons, advisors, and representatives of the university. *Informing these individuals of our needs, willingness to collaborate, and expressing gratitude for their assistance in the marketing of our program can help foster continued funneling of interested and promising students towards our undergraduate program.*

A system for gathering information from within and outside of the undergraduate program will also help inform our marketing strategy in the future. This will entail employment of Qualtrics surveys to current students, graduating seniors, and alumni. The surveys will assist the program in identifying what attracted students to the program, learning when and how students found out about the program, and garner feedback about student's experiences and perception of the program, before and after they graduate. The responses will provide valuable information that can be used to guide the decision making process related to employing strategies intended to recruit and retain students in the Behavioral Healthcare undergraduate program.

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