

December 1, 2016  
Faculty Senate Presentation

# Mental Health & Wellness at Stanford

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# About ASSU Executive

- Every student is a member of the Associated Students of Stanford University (ASSU)
- Our mandate: ensure the ASSU's long-term political and financial viability
- ASSU Executive builds a Cabinet and expends funds
- We engage with ASSU entities, University bodies, and external media outlets

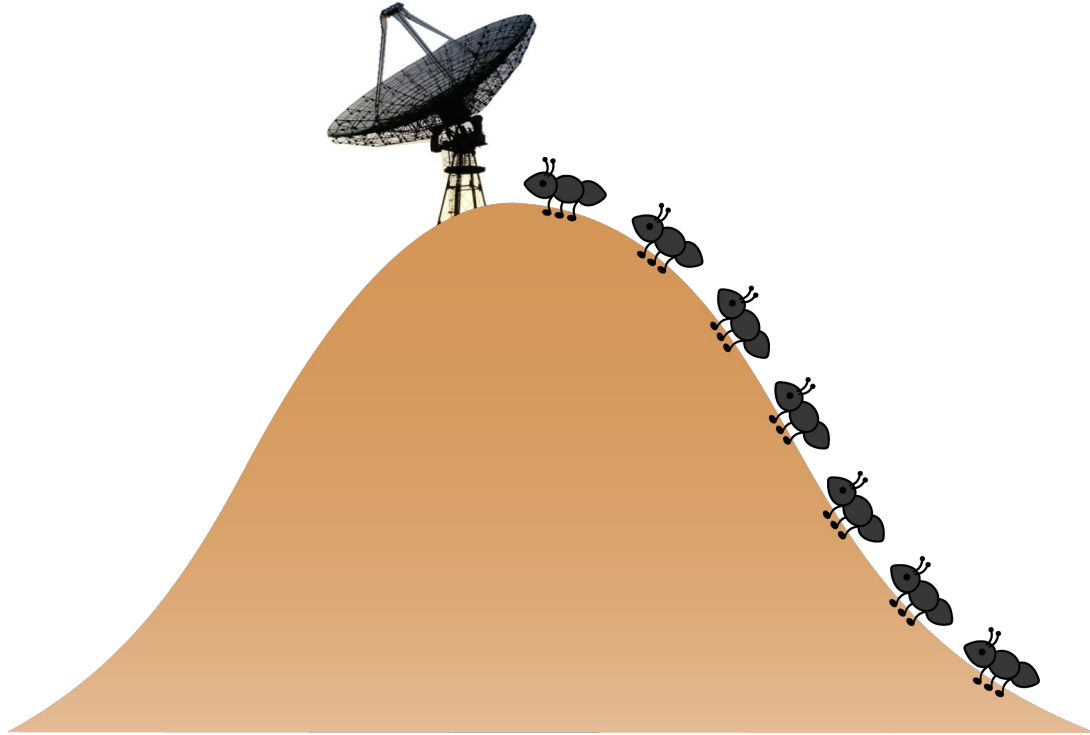


# #UNITE

- Our platform included key and perennial student issues
  - Mental Health & Wellness
  - Academics
  - Sexual Assault & Title IX
  - Community Development
  - Environmental Justice & Sustainability
- Mental Health & Well-being is a core issue area; it is of universal importance to students of all types



# Climbing the Stanford hill

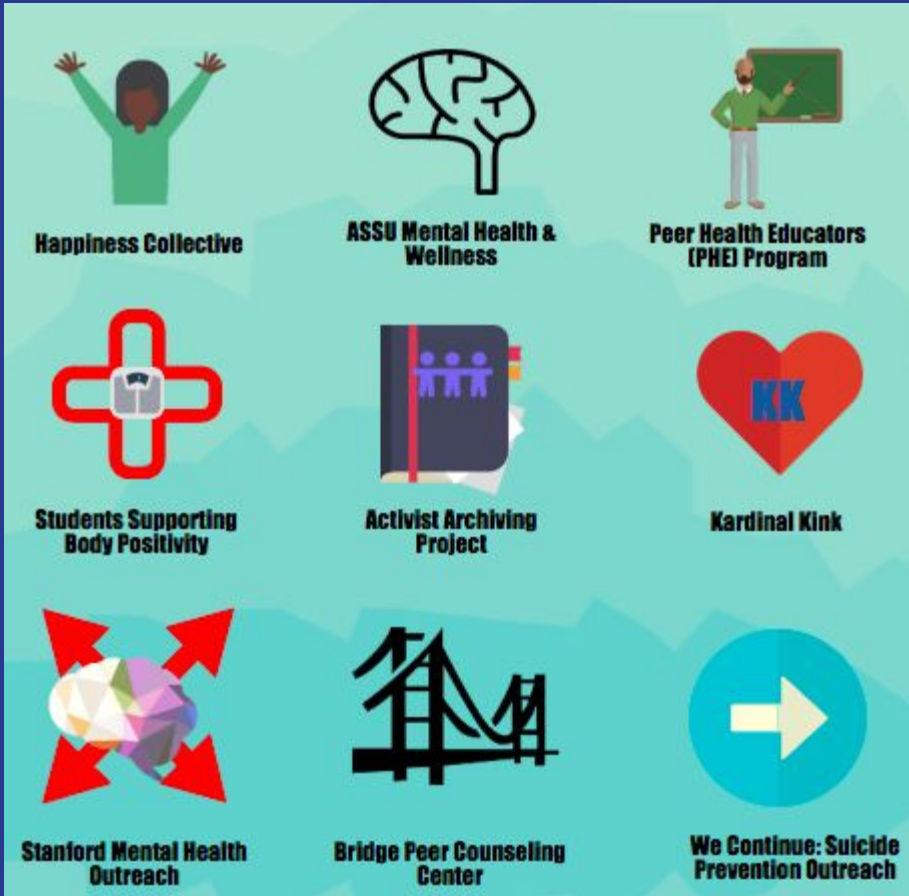


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# Student investment


- Student life is all-encompassing - and often difficult to balance
  - Courses
  - Residential community
  - Service, career, academic, hobby and other extracurricular groups
  - Social events
  - Planning for future pursuits
  - Off-campus obligations and interests
- “Duck Syndrome” oversimplifies the student experience
- Mental health and wellness is relevant to students throughout and beyond their time at Stanford





# Student Groups Committed to Improving Mental Health on Campus

# ASSU Executive Cabinet Initiatives

- 1) Revamp [wellness.stanford.edu](https://wellness.stanford.edu) to increase visibility and accessibility
  - 2) Identify and centralize scattered, less visible mental health resources (i.e. AA, grief counseling, etc.)
  - 3) Address student concerns about CAPS wait times
  - 4) Increase transparency of and facilitate improvements on Stanford's crises protocol
  - 5) Administer a survey to gauge campus climate on mental health (perceptions of campus resources, stigma, etc.)
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# Areas of Improvement


- Student perceptions regarding “lacking” mental health resources--  
*Many of the resources and initiatives are there; people just do not know about them*
- Disparate, decentralized student-run initiatives
- Lack of funding to sufficiently provide for students
- Dearth of resources for intermediate-level care
- Lack of communication between students and faculty/admin






# Faculty Engagement

# What Can Faculty Do?

- Offer support to students struggling with coursework or students exhibiting concerning symptoms
    - *Please do not take punitive measures against them*
  - Normalize check-ins with students to assess their well-being
  - Discuss the option of taking Incompletes
  - Remain mindful of sensitive topics and articulate trigger warnings as needed
  - Solicit mid-quarter feedback that speaks directly to ways teaching staff can better support student needs
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# Summary

- Mental health & wellness has been an issue at Stanford for decades
  - There has been robust student engagement to support our communities and improve our experience on campus and beyond
  - Student leaders, including previous ASSU Executives, have driven improvements in this area
  - Administrators have historically been key allies
  - Faculty can support students' mental health and champion wellness by:
    - Allowing students to prioritize well-being with compassion and/or by taking Incompletes
    - Being aware of sensitive topics and proceeding accordingly
    - Asking for feedback on teaching team-student interaction
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Thank you for your time