

Mission

The mission of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is to advance student success by promoting emotional wellness and psychological development via culturally competent, high quality, and confidential mental health services, prevention and educational programming, campus wide consultation, crisis response, and outreach. Our staff and trainees are committed to providing a safe, welcoming, and affirming environment for all students.

Vision

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is a trusted, visible, and wide-ranging university counseling center that continually strives to enhance the mental health and overall wellbeing of our students and the greater campus community.

Core Values

Inclusion and Equity, Integrity, Collaboration, Education, Connectedness and Support, Social Justice and Diversity, and High Quality Service

Staff

Director: Sara Byczek, PhD, LP

Assistant Director and Training Coordinator: Charles Starkman, PsyD, LP

Coordinator of Group Services: Lusine Hambardzumyan, M.S., M.A., LLP

Coordinator of Wellness Programming and Peer Education: Tracy Gallardo, LMSW

Coordinator of Athletic Services: El'Verson Mitchell, LMSW

Administrative Assistant: Janet Vasquez

Staff Changes

During the 2024-2025, CAPS had one clinician leave for a position at the Ann Arbor CAPS office. This position has been filled with Kimberly Stokes-Mason, PhD scheduled to start Mid-August.

Clinical Services

CAPS provides a variety of clinical mental health services for registered University of Michigan-Dearborn students including:

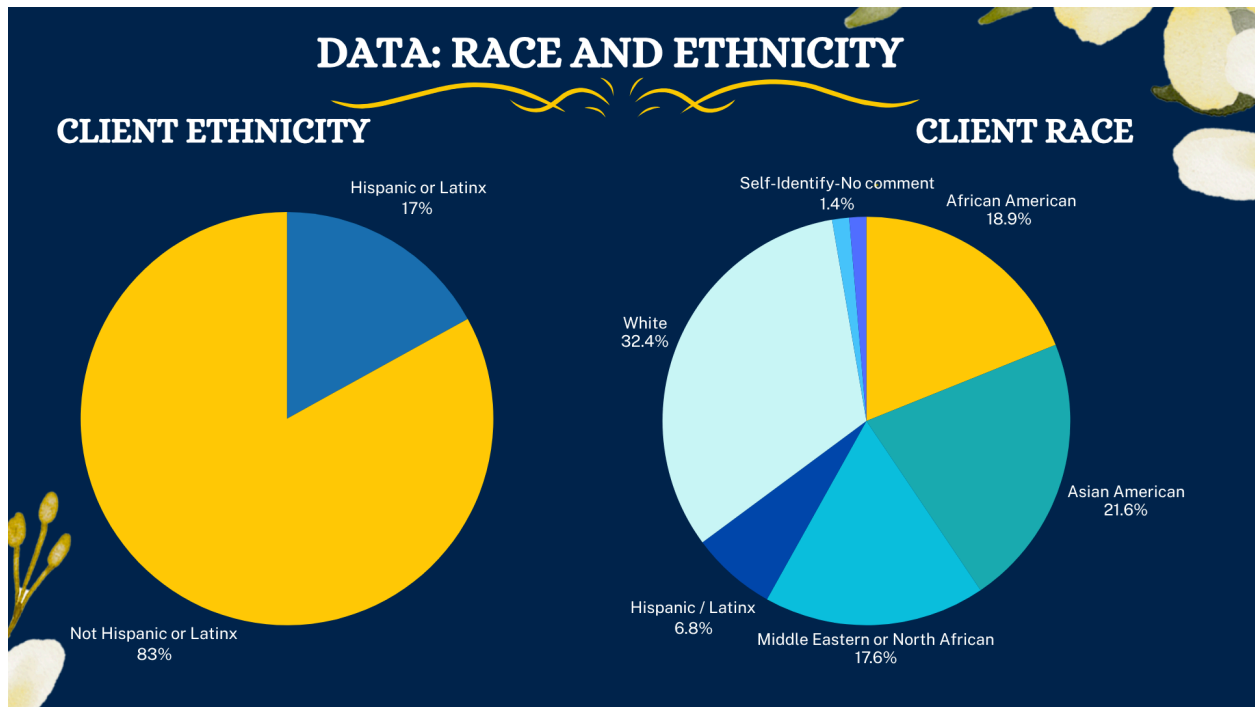
- Solution-focused individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Couples counseling
- Crisis intervention
- Case management and referrals

- UHS psychiatry and medication management
- Psychological assessments
- Workshops and presentations

This year (July 1st, 2024- June 30th, 2025) CAPS scheduled over 3300 appointments with 344 students. The average number of sessions per student was 6.71. Approximately 56% of students received 1-5 sessions, 22% received 6-10 sessions, and 18% received 11-20 sessions. Of the 344 students who sought out therapy services, 93% of these requests were marked non-urgent, 6% semi-urgent and 1% urgent. The average wait time for an intake appointment was 9.6 days from the time the student completed their assessment.

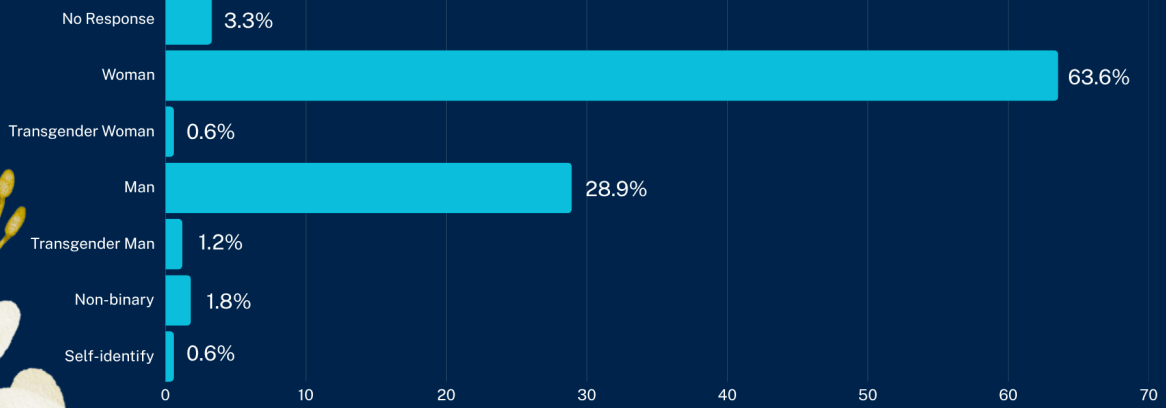
Twenty nine psychological assessments were completed this academic year totaling over 130 direct hours and 200 hours of report writing. Nineteen new clients were referred to University Health Services for psychiatric medication consultation.

CAPS Clients

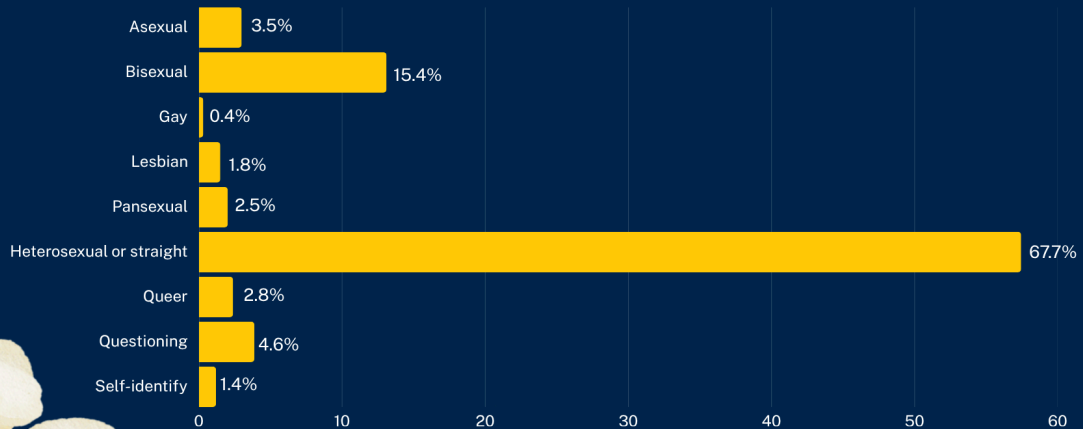


DEMOGRAPHICS:

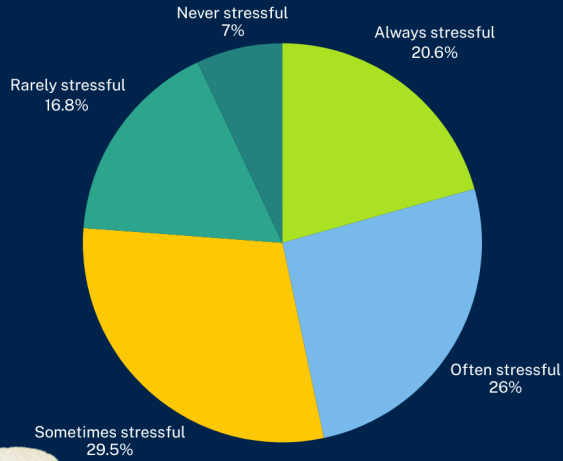
GENDER:



DEMOGRAPHICS: SEXUAL ORIENTATION:



DATA: CLIENTS EXPERENCING FINANCIAL STRESS



22.1% of clients work 20+ hours a week.



30% of clients are first generation.



38.7% of clients never experienced prior counseling.



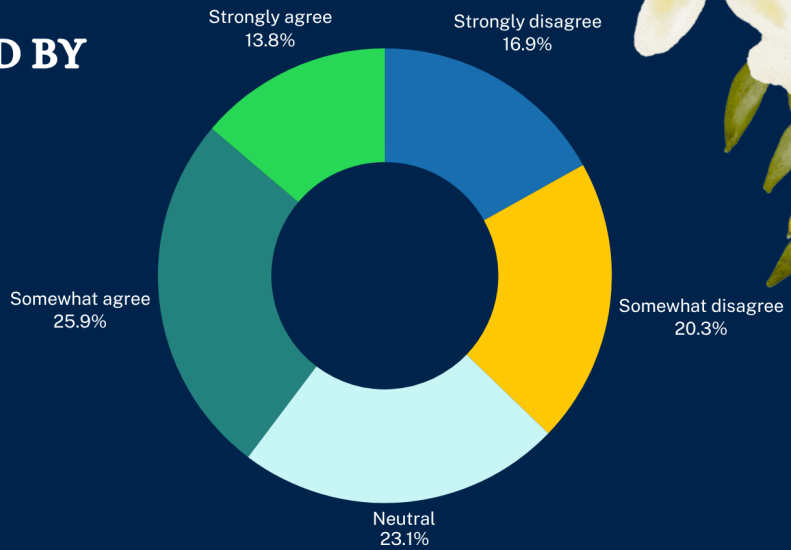
15.2% of clients are international students.



13.7% of clients are registered with Disability and Accessibility Services.

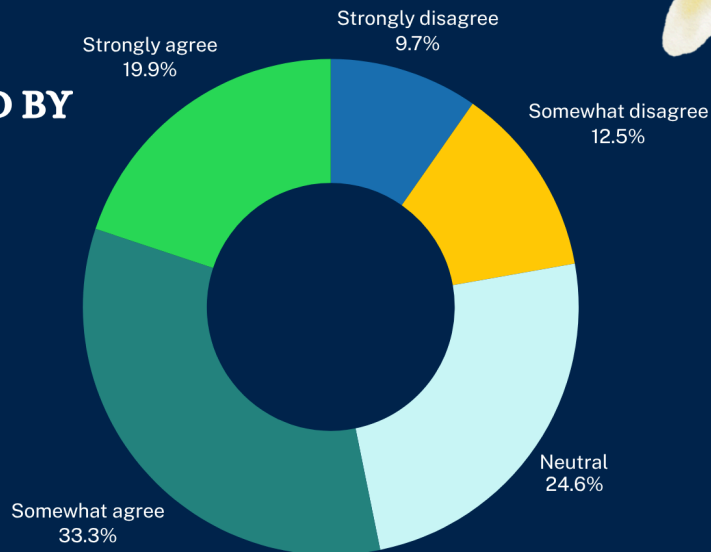
DATA: FAMILY SUPPORT

FEELS SUPPORTED BY FAMILY:



DATA: SUPPORT

FEELS SUPPORTED BY FRIENDS:



DATA: SUICIDE AND ABUSE



28.9% OF CLIENTS HAVE HAD AN UNWANTED SEXUAL EXPERIENCE.



32.3% OF CLIENTS HAVE ENGAGED IN SELF INJURY.

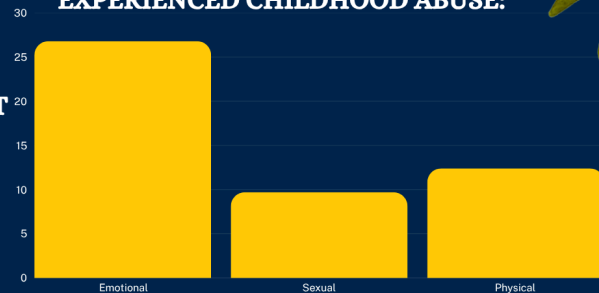


47.5% OF CLIENTS HAVE EXPERIENCED HARASSMENT/ABUSE AT LEAST ONCE.



43.1% OF CLIENTS HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE.

PERCENTAGES OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED CHILDHOOD ABUSE:



Training Programs

Counseling and Psychological Services has been a training site for doctoral and masters level psychology and counseling trainees for more than 20 years. The training program offered by CAPS is developmentally based. Trainees enter their experience at CAPS at different points in their graduate degree and therefore their experiences are individually tailored to meet their

unique needs. The program trains all practicum students in evidence-based practices and approaches. The center takes a social justice approach to working with clients and assists trainees in developing cultural sensitivity and a multicultural lens while having the opportunity to work with a diverse student population.

Training is an important part of CAPS' identity. The experience of having graduate level trainees completing their practicums at the office not only provides more options of clinicians from various backgrounds for UM-Dearborn students, but enriches the experiences of CAPS staff who work with the trainees as well. This year we were able to offer five positions, one masters-level psychology student and four doctoral level psychology students. These graduate trainees came from two different universities and programs.

Psychology Masters Training Program

Alex Smith (Eastern Michigan University) was CAPS' master's level psychology trainee. Master's-level practicum students are expected to carry a caseload of 6-8 individual clients, engage in outreach/program activities, participate in weekly individual and group supervision, attend weekly professional development seminars, engage as a liaison for a pre-identified area on campus, complete one psychological assessment, and attempt to co-lead a therapy group. Alex liaised with the Center for Social Justice and Inclusion.

Master's-level trainees are assigned clients whose reported concerns are less severe in order to match their developmental level as a clinician, as this practicum is typically their first experience engaging as a therapist. The severity of the presenting concern does increase as the trainee gains more experience, skills and confidence. All graduate trainees are required to video record all sessions and provide their individual supervisor with at least one hour of recordings each week to be reviewed. Alex provided 5% of all the clinical appointments for the Center this year.

Doctoral Training Program

Manda Harp, Leila Bazzi, Barbara Bruno and Mary Pendleton made up the cohort of doctoral level psychology trainees; all four attend Michigan School of Professional Psychology. Students in this practicum carry the same expectations as masters-level trainees with the addition of providing clinical services to students presenting with significantly more distress and concerns. The four doctoral level trainees provided 30% of all the clinical appointments for the Center this year and liaised with the Office of Student Life, Wellness Programming, International Student Affairs, and Veteran Services. The doctoral trainees also conducted psychological testing, primarily ADHD assessments.

Outreach and Liaison Relationships

CAPS provided over 90 different outreach presentations/events this year for over 200 hours reaching over 4400 members of campus. Some highlights from this year include:

- CAPS collaborated with UM-Dearborn's Office of Global Engagement on a presentation entitled "Staying Safe and Healthy While Abroad." Separate presentations were given to students and faculty on seven different occasions during the Winter 2025 semester. The

goal of the presentation was to provide an overview of study abroad requirements, understand mental health and safety risks associated with traveling abroad, and help students in creating a toolkit of different coping strategies to utilize if they find themselves struggling. Faculty were provided with a variety of resources on signs of mental health concerns and how to best support students facing such challenges when studying abroad.

- CAPS' Athletics Liaison El'Verson Mitchell had a very busy year. This year he focused on expanding access to mental health services and providing sport psychology consultation for student-athletes. Highlights from the year include increased student-athlete peer referrals, ongoing group support for the women's basketball team, and in-person presence at select practices and games for both women's basketball and men's baseball. Engagement with the department also grew through increased outreach requests, invitations to team and department banquets, and the distribution of CAPS webinar resources to athletics administration. These efforts have strengthened the partnership between CAPS and Athletics, promoting a more integrated and proactive model of support.

In addition to in person outreach/presentations, CAPS continued its efforts towards reaching and supporting the campus community through electronic means. Information on CAPS was included in the Dean of Students' weekly campus-wide email and the weekly Wellness Wednesday emails that focus on wellness tips continued throughout the year. CAPS continued its monthly series for a physical board that focuses on different mental health topics this academic year.



Mental Health and Wellness Peer Educator Program

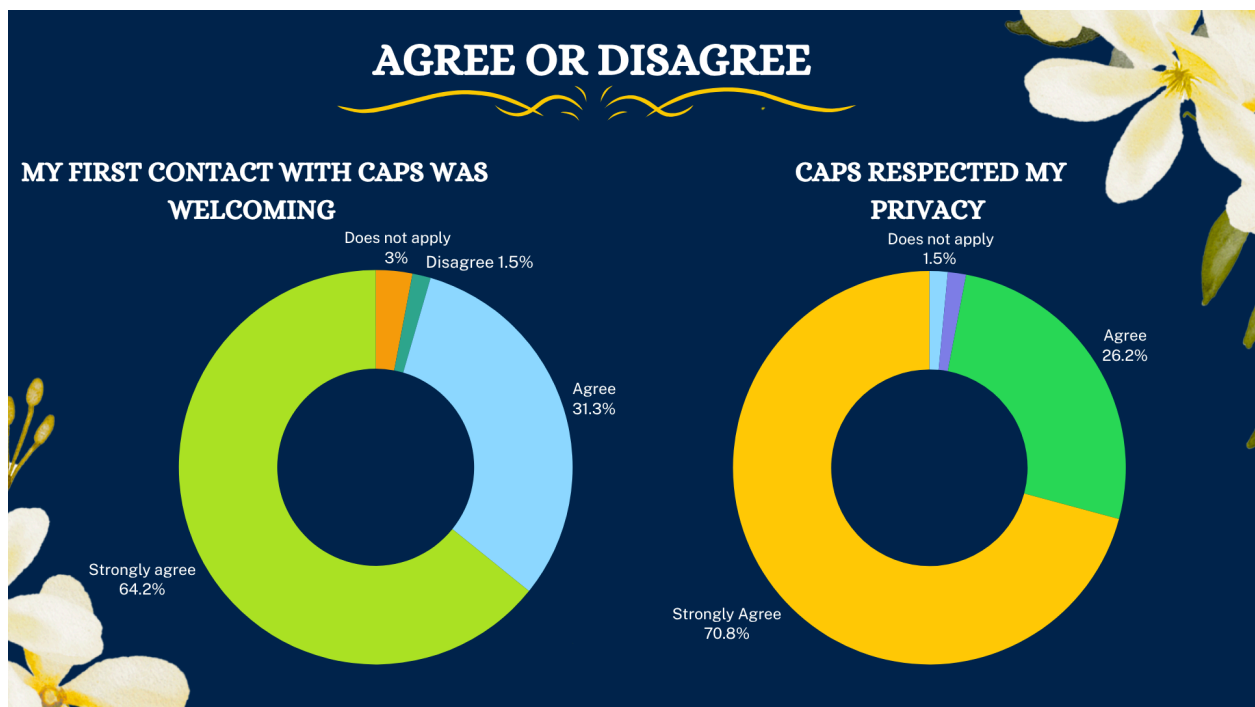
The mission of the Mental Health and Wellness Peer Educator Program is to provide support and education to UM-Dearborn students on mental health and wellness. The 2024-2025 academic year was the seventh year of the Mental Health and Wellness Peer Educator program. This year's cohort consisted of 10 students the first semester and 9 students the second semester.

The Mental Health and Wellness Peer Educator Program celebrated a year of growth, collaboration, and impact. Peer educators led weekly wellness tables that offered mindfulness activities to help students take short mental breaks, with the initiative expanding to a second location at the Mardigian Library due to high engagement. Monthly wellness events further supported student well-being, including the popular "Succulents and Flower Pot Painting" event, which drew around 40 participants. In collaboration with Plant Blue, students received soil and succulents to plant in their hand-decorated pots. During the winter semester, peer educators also participated in and facilitated small group discussions at the "Arts and Anti-Racism" event on the Ann Arbor campus. They collaborated with various student groups on mental health programming, including SHIFA, a new organization supporting the mental health and wellness of Muslim American students. Notably, five peer educators graduated in the winter semester, marking the successful culmination of their contributions. A recent article in *The Reporter* highlighted the meaningful work accomplished by the Peer Educators throughout the year, showcasing their dedication to fostering a healthier campus community.



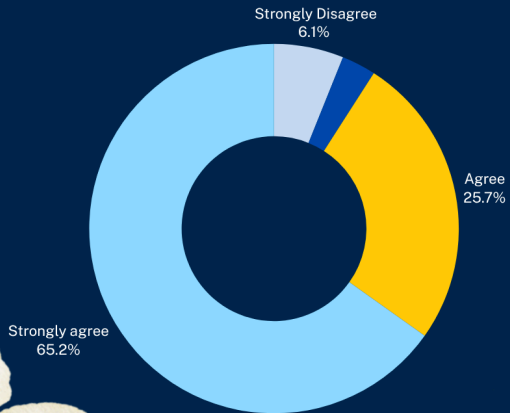
Satisfaction Survey

In June 2025, CAPS sent out a brief satisfaction survey to all students who completed the computer assessment to request counseling services this academic year. 69 students completed the survey that asked several Likert scale questions about their experience with CAPS and also provided open-ended space for any written feedback. Overall, students' experiences with CAPS were positive. One respondent described CAPS as "very helpful and kind, any students that are struggling mentally should consider looking into CAPS." Another student shared their experience with their clinician stating "My CAPS counselor was absolutely amazing. He was flexible in meeting times and genuinely cared. He listened and learned about my needs and wants and shifted his approach based on each conversation we had. I felt heard, understood, and he cared truly about my progress and my feelings. It was the most positive therapy experience I've had. The environment was great and I would recommend CAPS to anyone." However there were also several comments voicing dissatisfaction with their experience at CAPS. The general theme of dissatisfied comments centered on two areas, specifically frustration about psychological testing and dissatisfaction with the therapist they were matched with.

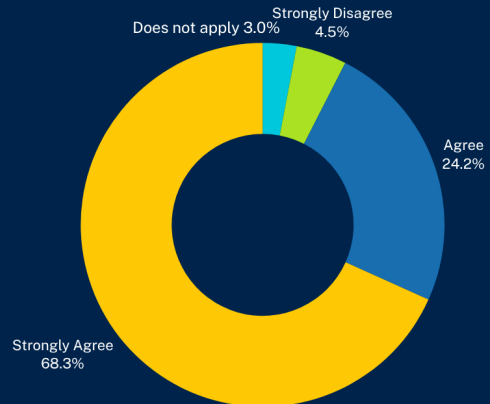


AGREE OR DISAGREE

I FELT SAFE SHARING WITH MY COUNSELOR

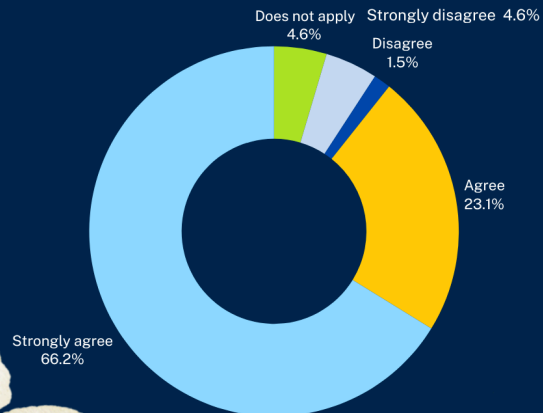


MY COUNSELOR TREATED ME WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT

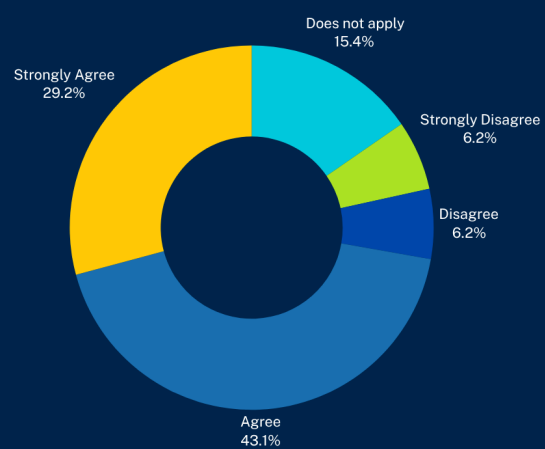


AGREE OR DISAGREE

MY COUNSELOR LISTENED TO AND UNDERSTOOD MY CONCERNS.

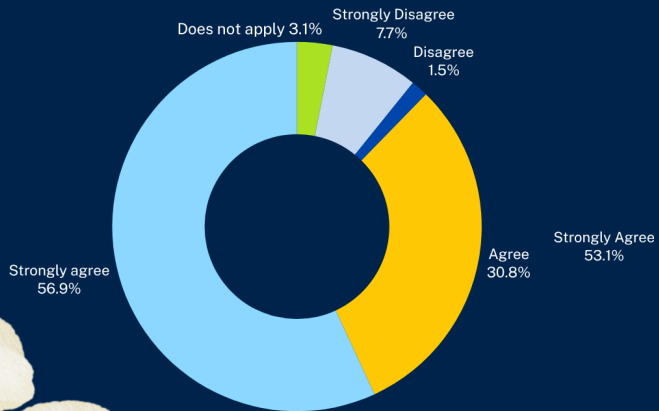


MY TREATMENT AT CAPS HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL.

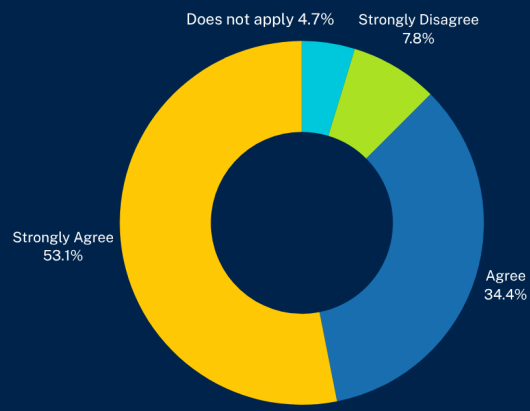


AGREE OR DISAGREE

I WOULD RECOMMEND CAPS SERVICES TO OTHER STUDENTS.

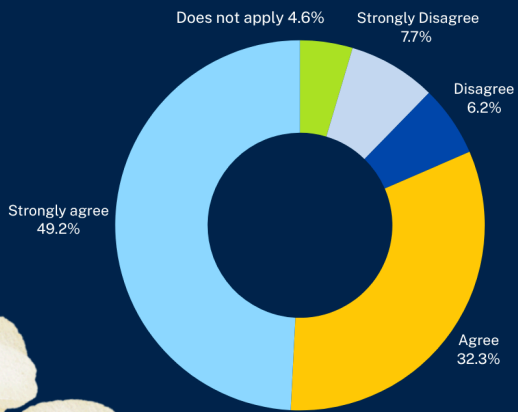


I WOULD RETURN TO CAPS, IF NEEDED.

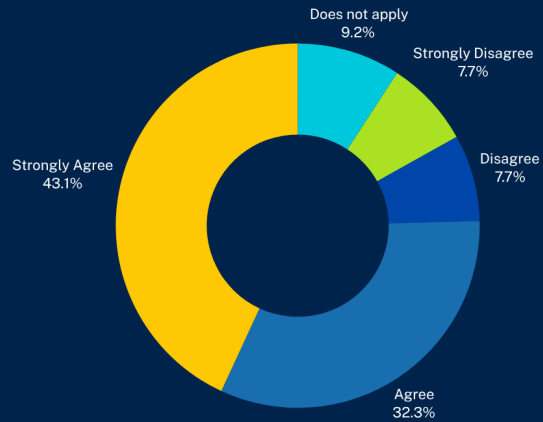


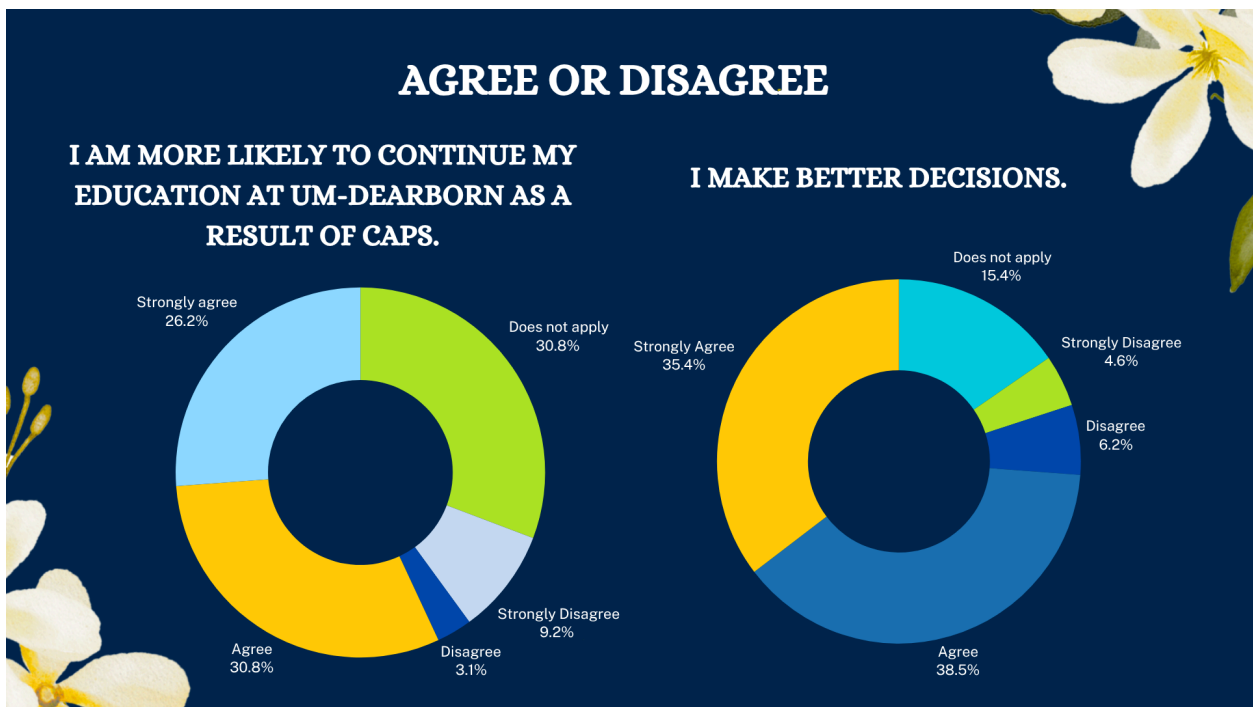
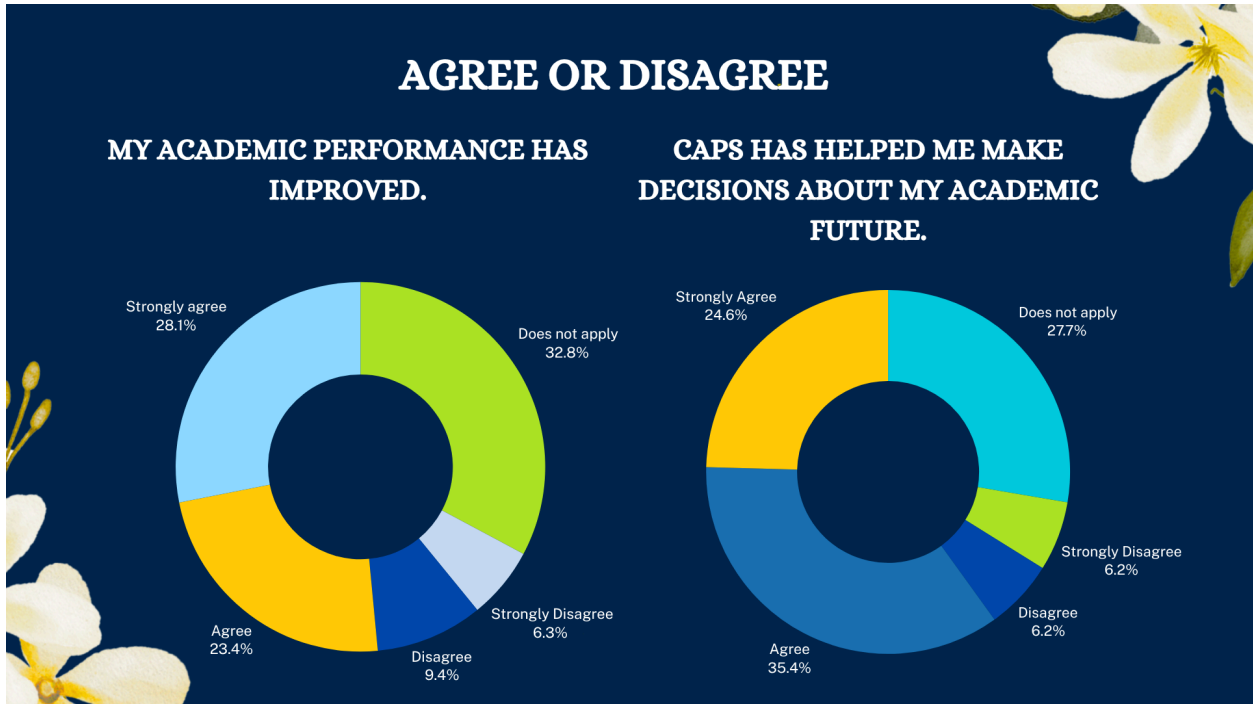
AGREE OR DISAGREE

MY COUNSELOR ASSISTED ME IN REACHING MY GOALS.



THE REASON(S) I CAME TO CAPS WAS/WERE ADDRESSED.





Progress on Previous Goals

Goals set for this academic year included the following:

- Increase faculty and staff knowledge of methods to support students' mental health -** CAPS has made significant progress on this goal by developing and offering a new two-hour training focused on faculty and staff development of skills to help support

student mental health. This training was developed by an extensive review of best practices and feedback obtained from Dearborn faculty, staff and students on their concerns. This training was offered a total of five times over the Fall and Winter semester with over 60 staff/faculty attending.

- **Increase knowledge of trauma informed practices** - At the beginning of this academic year CAPS clinicians and trainees completed the two-day STAIR approach to trauma work training. Due to participation in a grant project, CAPS clinicians were also offered bi-weekly consultation in order to work towards certification in the STAIR approach. As many of the students we serve have experienced or are currently experiencing trauma, gaining additional skills and methods in a shorter term clinical approach to trauma treatment was an exciting and important opportunity. Thus far several students have completed the STAIR protocol and appear to benefit from this treatment approach. Clinicians also have provided parts of this protocol to their clients as they see fit and have reported the skills gained in the training have been helpful. CAPS' director is signed up to complete the STAIR consultation training and can provide further consultation for staff who choose to pursue certification, as well as training new staff and trainees in the future.
- **Explore utilization of outdoor garden space for staff self-care and provision of mental health related services and/or programming-** During summer 2024, CAPS staff worked to develop their garden plot in the community garden and have utilized it as a place for self-care and team development. This summer CAPS partnered with a local cub scout pack for planting of native flowers and herbs in the space with the hope that next year's Mental Health and Wellness Peer Educators could use this space for events. Team building activities centered around tearing down and building a new fence for the space in the fall semester as well as helping to inspire the team to spend more time outdoors.



Future Goals

- **Investigate Student Advisory Boards** - CAPS plans to explore the idea of creating a student advisory board in order to better center students' voices and concerns connected to CAPS services. CAPS' administrative team will research what other UCCs have created to address this goal along with any existing best practices.
- **Increase student knowledge on psychological assessments** - One of the areas mentioned several times on the CAPS survey was related to the provision of psychological testing and what seemed to be a lack of understanding of the purpose and limitations of testing. CAPS will create a one page document for clients who are interested and/or being referred for testing titled "What To Know About Psychological Assessment?" that will review basic tenets of the testing process in hopes of decreasing misunderstandings and/or frustrations students may have about the process.