

Policy Title	AIU Students' Mental Health and Well-being Policy
Responsible AIU Office (Higher Management/Directorate)	Center for Student Welfare (CSW) [Following the request of the Policy Owner, the Responsible AIU Office within the corresponding Higher Management or Directorate will develop and administer a particular policy and procedures and will be accountable for the accuracy of its subject matter, its compliance with the pertinent legal and regulatory frameworks, its issuance, regular review and timely updating.]
Policy Owner (Executive Department/Office)	Well-being Unit at CSW [The Unit responsible for carrying out or oversight of said policy. The owner is accountable for and charged with triggering the creation of, implementing, enforcing, and updating the subject University policy, and developing/recommending relevant communication, education, and training and monitoring the effectiveness of a policy.]
Pertinent Dates	Policy was created on June 11 th , 2024

I. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all AIU students. The Center for Student Welfare (CSW) employs an integrated approach to student mental health and well-being with **four levels of intervention**:

1. **For all students**, University policies and practices are aligned to support mental health and wellbeing and to create a university community and campus environment that is supportive and inclusive, encouraging student engagement and connection.
2. **For students seeking or requiring professional intervention.**
3. **For students who require professional intervention urgently.**
4. **For students who want or require skills development.**

II. POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction:

- Mental health and well-being is an integral and essential component of health which enables individuals to realize their own abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively, and contribute to their community.
- The Center for Student Welfare (CSW) promotes an environment which encourages mental health and well-being for all AIU students and provides additional support where it is

appropriate and reasonable to do so. For example, support is targeted at individual students who have mental health difficulties and to students with particular needs, for instance students who might face cultural barriers while being isolated from their family and home for the first time. As CSW main vision is to provide an environment in which every student is cared for psychologically, spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally. With the mission of spreading AIU's culture of creativity, innovation, leadership, and sustainable development, through enhanced well-being and psychological support.

Principles:

1. CSW encourages the promotion, protection, and restoration of mental health and well-being amongst all its students at AIU. This policy aims to promote student mental health and well-being by aligning university policies and practices to support that goal. Towards achieving this aim, the following are the objectives of this policy:
 - To promote a university environment which is supportive of mental health and well-being and in which mental health problems are openly acknowledged and not stigmatized.
 - To refer students with diagnosed mental health problems, or students concerned about their mental health, to advice and information on the university support and services which are available to them.
 - To direct AIU faculty and staff to procedures that should be followed if they encounter an emergency arising from a student's mental health problems, or in case they suspect a student might be suffering from a mental health issue but with no apparent emergency.
2. CSW has a duty to respect and support the rights, needs, and privacy of students experiencing mental health problems and provides a supportive environment that assists students with mental health problems to realize their full academic potential and to fully complete their academic course of study.

Levels of Intervention:

1. All AIU students
2. Students seeking or requiring professional intervention
3. Students who want or require skills development
4. Emergencies; procedures to be followed by CSW staff and AIU faculty and staff who encounter an emergency arising from a student's mental health difficulties.

Confidentiality:

The Center of Student Welfare (CSW) will treat AIU Students' information about their mental health confidentially. Information is only shared with a student's consent and the student will be told who the information is being shared with and the reasons for sharing this information. There are limited

exceptions to this rule, for example where a student is considered a danger to themselves or others, where a crime is being investigated, where disclosure is required by law and in this case only the AIU vice president for academic affairs has the right to know the student's mental health information and decide who from AIU staff sharing the student information with, is beneficial and urgent.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Role and responsibility of Faculty members:

- Often the first person a student discloses a mental health problem to, or to notice that a student may have a mental health problem, will be a faculty member for example a lecturer or student adviser. Therefore faculty members should familiarize themselves with this policy and the associated CSW Student Mental Health and Well-being Procedures.
- Faculty members concerned about their students' mental health and well-being should refer and encourage them to seek support at the earliest opportunity. Faculty members may wish to direct their student to the CSW Student Counseling Service.

Role and responsibility of CSW staff:

- Provide CSW services with excellence and confidentiality.
- Refer severe mental illness cases to outside continuous therapy offered by psychiatrists and psychologists.

Role and responsibility of AIU students:

- Students are encouraged to take responsibility for taking active steps to help improve their own mental health. For example students should ensure that they get adequate rest and exercise, take medication if prescribed, and access appropriate support whether inside or outside CSW.
- Students are responsible for communicating their needs and seeking support from CSW, as CSW can't offer appropriate and reasonable supports without this information.
- Students concerned about a fellow student's mental health and well-being should refer their fellow student and encourage them to seek support at the earliest opportunity. Students may wish to direct their fellow student to the CSW Student Counseling Service.

The CSW Student Counseling Services provide counseling and psychological support services to AIU students.

How to access the CSW Student Counseling Services:

Students can self-refer to the CSW Counseling Service by signing up in the one-to-one counseling online form to reserve an appointment or visit the center and know how to book an appointment. Students can also be referred by a faculty member at AIU. Appointments are offered as soon as possible, but waiting lists have to be used when demand is high. In a crisis an appointment will be offered on the day of referral.

III. POLICY STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

1. Responding to students in distress:

1.1 Mental health problems affect each student differently and a wide range of signs and symptoms can indicate that a student has mental health problems. It is important that faculty members and staff are aware of the possible indicators that might indicate a student is in distress. Indicators that a student may have a mental health problem can include:

- **Behavior:** the student might be behaving in an unusual or unpredictable manner that is causing concern, which might include changes in patterns of attendance or their academic performance might change dramatically.
- **Statements:** the content of the student's conversations might seem out of character, or the student might express suicidal thoughts or ideas.
- **Appearance:** the student might seem tense, irritable, sad, or withdrawn, or the student's appearance might have changed.
- **Additional Information:** the student might have declared a mental health problem or other people might be expressing concerns for the student.

1.2 Don't avoid the situation:

- If the faculty members or staff have good relationship with the student, they might be able to approach them and raise their concerns directly with them. This should be done sensitively and they should direct the student to the appropriate support counseling services offered by CSW at AIU.

2. Confidentiality:

- Any disclosure of a mental health problem by a student to faculty members or staff must be treated sensitively, respectfully, and confidentially.
- Information can be disclosed without a student's consent in the following, limited circumstances:

- Where the student is considered a danger to themselves or others.
- Where a crime is being investigated and information is requested.

In these rare instances, strictly limited information, proportionate to the situation that has arisen, may be disclosed to third parties after the approval of the AIU vice president for academic affairs.

- Only the CSW Well-being Unit staff and AIU vice president for academic affairs have access to the students' mental health information.

3. Roles and responsibilities of Faculty members:

- Faculty members should refer students to the resources which are available and encourage them to seek support at the earliest opportunity.
- In exceptional circumstances, where a student suffers from panic attack, hysterical episode or is a danger to others, faculty members should call the AIU Clinic's doctor or CSW Well-being Unit staff.
- If a student discloses a mental health condition to any faculty members, they should make the student aware of CSW counseling services and refer them to the CSW well-being unit staff.
- Faculty members must be clear about what they can and can't do. They shouldn't be expected to solve the problem, but refer the student to the CSW well-being unit staff.
- Faculty members can have conversations with students about mental health, modeling help-seeking and self-care behaviors, and approaching coursework and grading with flexibility.

IV. FORMS/INSTRUCTIONS (if applicable)

How to access the CSW Student Counseling Service:

Students can self-refer to the CSW Counseling Service by signing up in the one-to-one counseling online form to reserve an appointment or visit the center (CSW) and know how to book an appointment. Students can also be referred by a faculty member at AIU. Appointments are offered as soon as possible, but waiting lists have to be used when demand is high. In a crisis an appointment will be offered on the day of referral.

V. CONTACT INFORMATION

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