

CR309: Student Mental Health

Policy Title:	Student Mental Health Policy
Policy Number:	CR309
Owner:	Director of Health, Wellness & Accessibility, Student Success Division
Approved by:	Board of Governors
Effective Date:	January 31, 2025

Links to Other Policy:	Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities AC202 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy CR301
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St. Lawrence College is committed to making our resources fully accessible to all persons. This document will be made available in alternative format upon request.

1. BACKGROUND

St. Lawrence College (the “College”) is committed to supporting the holistic mental health and well-being of its students. This policy recognizes that physical and mental health and well-being is a shared responsibility between the institution, its students and the community. This Policy outlines the principles and commitments of the College to student mental health and well-being and to increase awareness of and provide access to information relating to the range of mental health programming, services and supports at the College. In addition, this Policy details the reporting obligations of the College on the programs, services and supports with respect to student mental health.

The College’s programs, services, and supports are intended to promote student well-being and provide short-term mental health counselling, supports and guidance. These services are not a substitute for specialized medical or psychiatric care. Students requiring formal clinical diagnosis and active psychiatric treatment are encouraged to engage in referral processes for specialized assessment and intervention.

2. PURPOSE

The College recognizes that individual health practices, as well as the social, physical, spiritual and psychological environment, are important factors that collectively contribute to personal success and positive well-being of its students. The purpose of this policy is to support and uphold the College’s commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning and living environment. It encourages the active participation of all members of the College in promoting and engaging in health and well-being programming and initiatives and actively solicits input through the Integrated Mental Health Strategy, Student Wellness services, and other means used to identify needs, offer interventions and supports, and assess outcomes.

3. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all students of the College as defined herein. The College provides mental health resources, programs, and services and strives to ensure equitable access for all students, addressing individual needs and removing systemic barriers. These supports are designed to be culturally safe by fostering an inclusive environment that respects and accommodates the diverse identities, values, and experiences of students, ensuring they feel valued, respected, and free from discrimination or bias.

4. DEFINITIONS

“Student(s)” – means any individual who is enrolled or registered for study at St. Lawrence College. Individuals who are active in a program, but not enrolled in classes for a particular term (e.g., approved leave or placement term) are considered to have a continuing student relationship and are included in the definition of student (i.e., and having an active, current SLC Student ID).

“Enrolled” – means having current or future classes, placements or other academic activities included in the student’s account.

“Registered” – means having accepted an offer of admission, created a student account and paying tuition and/or required fees.

5. POLICY STATEMENTS

5.1 The College strives to provide a holistic approach to community wellness, with key priority to student mental health and well-being, in alignment with our Integrated Mental Health Strategy, CSA Post Secondary Mental Health Standards, and key principles of the Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Universities and Colleges. The College has declared its commitment to safeguard, promote and continuously improve the mental health and well-being of its students. The College has developed and maintains policies, practices and programs that contribute to a physically and mentally safe and healthy learning and living environment for students, focused on a supportive mental health and wellness culture, positive physical environment, healthy lifestyle, and institutional commitment and social responsibility.

5.2 The College offers a range of student-centred programs and services to address student mental health needs. These programs and supports include pro-active, health promotion and prevention and early intervention measures to raise awareness of mental health issues, encourage constructive help-seeking behaviours, reduce stigma, and foster and build capacity around mental health flourishing and the social determinants of mental and emotional well-being. The College is also committed to creating a help-seeking environment and responding to student health-related disabilities, mental illness and mental health decline through interventions, treatment as well as facilitating access to appropriate response services appropriately aligned to the assessed needs of the student.

5.3 An available inventory of mental health resources is available for internal and external mental health resources and programming through our student-facing College *Student Wellness* website, and promoted regularly through student engagement in addition to diverse communication platforms. Mental health services are culturally responsive in recognition of the diversity of students' backgrounds and experiences.

5.4 Consistent student-centered policies, practices and procedures focused on student well-being, success and retention, that reduce additional stress and barriers while also upholding academic standards and expectations, are endorsed by the College.

5.5 In accordance with the privacy guidelines identified in College policy and other legislative privacy obligations (including Ontario's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and Personal Health Information Protection Act and as appropriate), the College shall collect data regarding student mental health through service use statistics and participation in health promotion/upstream well-being

programming.

5.6 The College shall ensure the privacy and confidentiality of students accessing mental health services in accordance with the service area “Confidentiality” standard operating procedures and all statutory and regulatory privacy obligations.

5.7 The College shall provide opportunity for voluntary student feedback and input on mental health services and mental health needs through student experience surveys and other quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

6. MONITORING

6.1 The Owner of this Policy will conduct a Policy review at least once every five (5) years, commencing from the date of its approval.

6.2 The Owner of the Policy will ensure that the College reports on an annual basis to the Board of Governors and Ministry of Colleges and Universities the following year regarding student mental health programs, services and supports:

- a. Anonymized utilization data for the following services: Campus Health Services and Student Wellness & Accessibility Services.
- b. Trends in student mental health needs and any relevant plans to address identified gaps in service needs or emerging trends.
- c. Additional information as required by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

NEXT POLICY REVISION DATE

January 2030