

5 April, 2017

TO: Mental Health Services, FEDS VP Internal, FEDS President, Marlee Spafford  
FROM: Science Society Board of Directors  
SUBJECT: Resolution on Future Action to be Taken by Mental Health Services

To those whom it may concern:

This letter is to inform the necessary parties of a resolution passed by the Board of Directors of the Science Society, the Faculty of Science student government, involving concerns regarding the mental health services offered at the University of Waterloo. The Science Society is a subsidiary and constituent member of the Federation of Students, which serves to represent the interests of Science students at Faculty and University levels, as well as, provides services for the Science student body. The Science Society Board of Directors serves as the legislative tool and student government for UWaterloo Science students from all backgrounds.

The Board of Directors (hereafter “Board”) and the Executive of the Science Society have feel that mental health concerns affect a significant fraction of students at the university, but help is often not readily available. The Board does understand that the University has put a significant amount of effort into counselling available here, but Mental Health Services are extremely understaffed for servicing 30,000 students. Yet, the board understands that hiring counsellors requires greater funds and current facilities to be extended to provide office space. It further expressed severe distress over the incredibly high wait times to see a psychiatrist after reports of suicidal thoughts. They collectively express disappointment that the university has done poorly to promote the services available or make the statistics pertaining to the mental health of students readily available.

The Board acknowledges the numerous new initiatives and expresses support for the individuals in Mental Health Services who diligently work to address student concern. However, in light of recent events, the board has put together a resolution on future actions to be taken by Mental Health Services, future Science Society executives and other groups on campus. Some of the board’s recommendations are enumerated below, but not limited to:

1. Recommends a letter is included into each University of Waterloo admissions package reminding parents/guardians the importance of addressing both realistic expectations at the academic level of Waterloo and their support regardless of academic success with the prospective student;
2. Requests more counsellors are hired even if this comes at an increase to student fees
3. Recommends that a mandatory 10 minute meeting is set up for each student with a counsellor in their first month of first year to explain the services available to them;
4. Emphasizes increasing support staff (preferably a councillor per residence) dedicated to mental health;
5. Recommends increasing the number of one-on-one sessions to one per month between first year students and their Dons in residence;

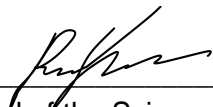
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6. Requests that statistics pertaining to mental health at Waterloo be made publicly available, including but not limited to, estimated wait times for mental health services and transparent metrics regarding mental health and suicide of currently enrolled students;
7. Directs the Science Society Executive to:
  - a. Create a location designated to display events or initiatives pertaining to mental health (inclusive of mental health Wednesdays) to increase ease of access to information without concerns regarding over-cluttering by posters,
  - b. Continue to display events or initiatives pertaining to mental health in locations not designated for mental health,
  - c. Pursue brochures on services for mental health accessible to students and distribute them to the various clubs and societies under SciSoc, as well as encourage them to be distributed during Orientation,
  - d. Encourage the executive members of the various clubs and societies under SciSoc to acknowledge and pass on any specific complaints or solutions suggested to them;


The Board wants to express the concerns of the Undergraduate student body through the resolutions mentioned above. The Board requests the appropriate bodies at the University to further work on bettering the mental health services provided for students on campus. The Board requests for the Federation of Students (FEDS) Vice President Internal to further look into the concerns expressed both in this letter and the resolution.

Please find the resolution attached below, and feel free to contact the Science Society Executive at 519-888-4567 ext. 32325 or by email at [SciSoc@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:SciSoc@uwaterloo.ca) for further information or questions. Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

  
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(VP Internal of the Science Society)

Date: 2017-04-05

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(President of the Science Society)

Date: 5 April, 2017

  
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(Speaker of the Board of Directors)

Date: 5 April, 2017