



3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



3.3.5

Mental health support for students

Year 2023



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3.3.5 Mental health support for students

Ajman University (AU) continued to champion mental health and well-being for its community, including faculty, staff, students, and the extended AU network in the year 2023. Through its Counseling Policy, AU provides services via the Student Counseling Unit, offering support for personal, social, and psychological challenges to its students. Additionally, AU extends its mental health initiatives to the public, offering free counseling, self-help resources, workshops, and wellness activities designed to build resilience. Regular workshops focus on raising mental health awareness and teaching practical well-being skills for the students. These support initiatives reflect AU's ongoing commitment to fostering a healthy, productive environment that promotes personal growth, good health and well-being.

A. Counselling Unit

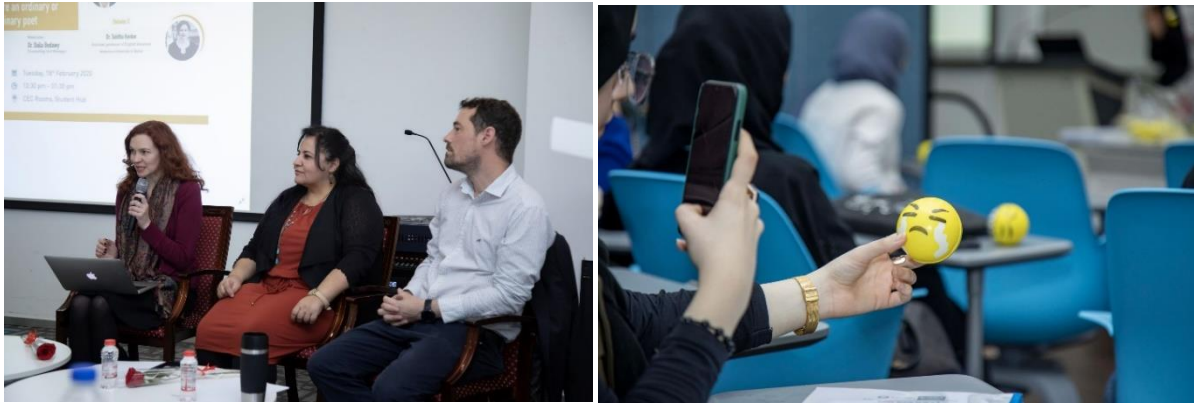
In the year 2023, The Counseling Unit at Ajman University (AU) continued to offer up to four free individual counseling sessions for students, staff, and faculty. The Unit addresses a wide range of issues, including self-discovery, relationship challenges, low self-esteem, fatigue, isolation, mood fluctuations, and depression. The Counseling Unit at Ajman University organized a variety of events in the academic year 2023 to support students' well-being, personal development, and academic success. Below is the list of workshops relevant to Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3): Good Health and Well-being:

1. Stress Management: Exploring What Works Best for You (Apr 11, 2023)
2. Common Ground for Psychological Adjustment (Apr 13, 2023)
3. Emotions: Biological and Psychological Perspectives (Apr 25, 2023)
4. The Role of the Community Pharmacist in Mental Well-being (Apr 26, 2023)
5. Be Good to Yourself: The Journey to Self-Love (Apr 27, 2023)
6. Bullying Behavior and Psychological Health (May 8, 2023)
7. Mental Health Issues Involving Pregnancy Loss (Feb 14, 2023)
8. Premarital Screening and Counseling: What You Need to Know (Feb 28, 2023)
9. Ways to Motivate Yourself to Study (Aug 22, 2022)
10. How to Be a Supportive Friend (Sep 20, 2022)
11. Refocusing in Times of Change (Sep 21, 2022)
12. World Mental Health Day (Oct 10, 2022)
13. Positive Thinking & Believing in Yourself (Oct 11, 2022)
14. Mental and Physical Self-Care (Nov 7, 2022)
15. Making and Maintaining Social Connections (Nov 14, 2022)
16. Anger Management (Nov 28, 2022)

Trained counselors conduct sessions with strict confidentiality, creating a safe space to explore concerns. Through talking and active listening, counseling helps individuals understand the root causes of their stress. Sessions are tailored to address specific challenges, support individuals in coping with crises, and improve interpersonal relationships.

Please refer to the link below:

<https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/student-life/counseling-unit/counseling-unit-services>



1. Individual Counseling:

Working individually with a professional counselor offers many benefits. It can be a relief to share difficulties you've faced alone with an impartial listener. Whether you're dealing with a long-standing concern, facing new challenges, or simply feeling that something isn't right, counseling provides a supportive space to explore and address these issues.

2. Group Counseling:

Open agenda group sessions offer an effective way to address various issues by providing a space to explore your interactions with others and benefit from their insights and support.

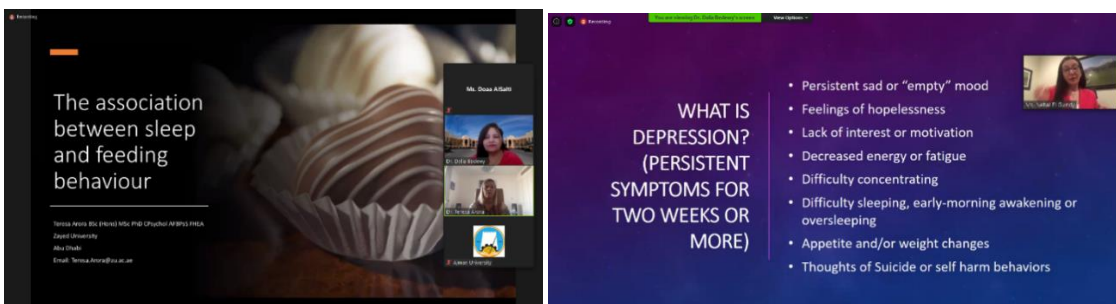
After scheduling a session with a counselor, you can choose to meet in person or use telemental health options, such as Zoom, phone consultations, or WhatsApp chats.

3. Students supporting students

One of the most valuable resources students have at the University is each other. Providing support is not always easy. In this context, the following thoughts may be helpful:

- Individuals should be realistic about what they can offer regarding support.
- They can play a role in building a support network, emphasizing that being a friend's sole or primary source of support may be overwhelming and compromise objectivity. Encouraging friends to have multiple sources to turn to is essential.
- Encouraging a friend to seek professional help is a beneficial step, and it's worth exploring any barriers preventing them from doing so.

Student Counseling Unit also offer students the chance to support each other academically by facilitating a student network for discussing course-related topics and explaining concepts to one another.



4. Let's Talk/Let's Tele Talk

"Let's Talk/Tele Talk" is a program that offers convenient access to informal consultations with a counselor during specific hours, with no need for prior registration.

This program is ideally suited for the following individuals:

- Students who are uncertain about counseling wish to experience what it's like to talk with a counselor;
- Students who face specific problems and are seeking someone to discuss them with;
- Students who are concerned about a friend and seek guidance on how to handle the situation;
- Students who are not interested in ongoing counseling value the perspective of a counselor.

Meetings are conducted on a first-come, first-served basis. "Let's Talk/Tele Talk" connects AU students with the counseling unit, providing support without needing an appointment.

5. Parental Counseling and Lectures

The Counseling Unit provides psychological services for parents because this will reflect on student's mental health.

6. Alumni Counseling

The Counseling Unit, in partnership with the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, provides complimentary short-term consultation sessions for alumni and their parents. These consultations can be conducted via WhatsApp, Zoom meetings, email, or phone calls.

7. Academic Accommodation for Students with Disability

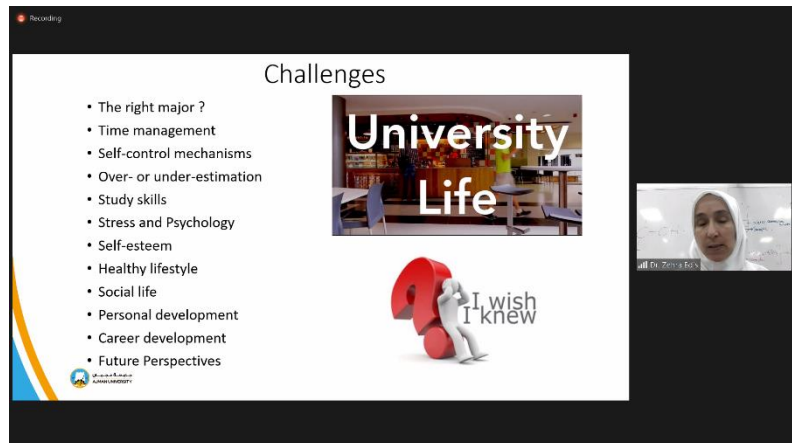
The Counseling Unit provides reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Counseling is beneficial for those looking to:

- Fully integrate into university life
- Enhance their personal abilities
- Improve communication skills
- Learn the tips for success and excellence
- Build self-confidence
- Acquire better time-management skills
- Overcome feelings of fear and anxiety

The Counseling Unit provides support for a variety of issues, encompassing stress, anxiety, depression, relationship challenges, and sleeping disorders.

B. Policy on Student Counseling Services

Ajman University (AU) has continued its commitment to mental health and well-being in the year 2023 with the ongoing implementation of its Policy on the Counseling Services. The policy for Student Counselling Services was in place in the year 2023, which provides comprehensive support for students dealing with personal, social, and psychological



challenges, ensures that all AU community members, including students, faculty and staff. The students can access confidential counseling services by appointment through the Student Counseling Unit (CU). This initiative is designed to foster a supportive environment that promotes mental resilience and emotional well-being. In addition to individual counseling, AU offers a range of workshops, self-help resources, and wellness activities to further empower students to manage stress, build coping strategies, and enhance overall mental health. The university’s counseling policy and services align with its broader commitment to maintaining a healthy, productive environment that prioritizes personal growth and students’ well-being.

Please refer to the link below:

<https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/student-life/counseling-unit/counseling-policy>

C. Workshops

Throughout the year 2023, Ajman University (AU) continued its commitment to provide mental health support for students, staff and faculty. AU conducted numerous mental health events take place year-round at various locations such as Medical Services, hostels, sports complexes, and more. The workshop schedule is accessible through the Ajman university website.

Please refer to the link below:

<https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/student-life/counseling-unit/workshops>



D. Self-Help Resources

In the year 2023, students have access available to multiple Self-help resources at the Ajman University (AU). These resources include extensive self-help materials such as written handouts, books, and videos on many topics. These resources are helpful for students to understand the issues they are facing and are often used alongside individual counseling in the Counseling Unit.

Please refer to the link below:

<https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/student-life/counseling-unit/self-help-resources>

E. Disability Support

The Committee for Students with Disabilities was tasked with implementing and advising on policies, programs, and training related to accessibility and inclusion in the year 2023. The committee is dedicated to advancing AU's commitment to ensuring equal rights for students with disabilities, enabling them to actively participate in university activities and student life.

Please refer to the link below:

<https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/student-life/counseling-unit/disability-support>

F. Events and Activities by Counselling Services

The Counseling Unit continued to organize and extend numerous activities, workshops, and student sessions in the year 2023. These events raised awareness about mental health-related topics and, when needed, provided individualized mental health support for students through one-to-one sessions.

All the events organized or hosted by Counselling services can be found in the newsletter published on the Ajman University (AU) website. Please refer to the links below:

- **Fall 2023** https://www.ajman.ac.ae/upload/files/unit/Fall_2022-2023.pdf
- **Spring 2023** https://www.ajman.ac.ae/upload/files/unit/Spring_2022-2023.pdf

Some of the key events or activities organized by the Counselling Unit are listed below:

1. Ajman University Celebrates 2023 World Mental Health Day

In the year 2023, Ajman University marked World Mental Health Day with a series of events and activities designed to raise awareness about mental health issues and promote well-being for students. The university hosted workshops, talks, and interactive sessions, focusing on a variety of mental health topics such as stress management, emotional resilience, and strategies for maintaining mental well-being. These initiatives aimed to reduce stigma, provide valuable resources, and

encourage open discussions about mental health challenges. The Counseling Unit at Ajman University organized a special event to celebrate World Mental Health Day. This event was part of the university's ongoing efforts to promote mental health and support students. It featured four workshops covering essential topics and a diverse range of activities.

Please refer to the link below:

<https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/news/2023/ajman-university-celebrates-world-mental-health-day-with-special-activities>



2. Mental Health Issues Involving Pregnancy Loss

The Counseling Unit held an informative workshop focusing on the mental health aspects of pregnancy loss. This comprehensive session addressed key topics, including clarifying facts, dispelling myths, and providing practical guidance on how to offer support.

3. Workplace Bullying: What If It Happened to You?

The Counseling Unit hosted a workshop on workplace bullying, covering various aspects of the issue. The session explored different forms of bullying behavior in a professional setting and clarified the distinctions between workplace bullying, illegal discrimination, and harassment based on protected group status.

4. Premarital Screening and Counseling: What You Need to Know

This workshop provided a clear definition of premarital screening, emphasizing its importance and the role of genetic counseling in the process.

5. Stress Management: Exploring What Works Best for You

This workshop offered a comprehensive introduction to positive psychology, with a focus on stress management, life skills, and stress reduction techniques.

6. Emotions: Biological and Psychological Perspectives

The workshop explored the concept of emotions and how they are triggered in response to challenges. It covered the benefits of understanding and managing emotions, strategies for coping with different emotional states, and examined both the biological and psychological perspectives on emotions.

7. Emotional Intelligence: Cultivating Human Interactions

This workshop offered a comprehensive overview of emotional intelligence, including its definition, key domains, the concept of self-empowerment, essential traits of emotionally intelligent individuals, strategies for enhancing emotional intelligence, and engaging activities to develop expressive intelligence.

8. Responding to Conflict: Strategies for improving communication

The workshop focused on different aspects of conflict, including its causes and types, key principles of conflict resolution, essential conflict resolution skills, and effective methods for preventing, de-escalating, or resolving disputes through improved communication.

9. Body Image Positivity & Self-Esteem

The workshop explored various topics, including the definition of beauty, how thoughts influence self-confidence, personal journeys toward self-acceptance, ways to achieve inner beauty, perceptions of external beauty, and strategies for maintaining physical well-being.

G. Extended Mental health support for students: College Events in 2023

1. Seminar on College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences organizes a seminar on “Dealing with mentally ill patients: a focus on patient counseling by pharmacists

In the year 2023, the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences continued its commitment to holistic mental health awareness by organizing a seminar on “Dealing with Mentally Ill Patients: A Focus on Patient Counseling by Pharmacists.”

Ajman University (AU) organized a holistic seminar that provided valuable insights in supporting patients with mental health conditions, focusing on effective counseling techniques for students, staff, and faculty. The session included practical examples and case studies, offering a real-world perspective on the challenges and opportunities in mental health care within the pharmacy setting, reinforcing AU's commitment to addressing mental health from a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach.



Dr. Khalil Ibrahim, a consultant psychiatrist at the hospital, served as the keynote speaker.

Coordinated by Dr. Alaa Farajallah from the Office of Experiential Learning, the seminar emphasized the critical role pharmacists play in supporting patients with psychiatric conditions. Dr. Ibrahim encouraged pharmacy students to prioritize empathy, active listening, and comprehensive counseling in their future practice. The session featured practical examples and case studies, enhancing students' understanding of mental health care within pharmacy. Attendees actively engaged with questions,

and Dr. Alaa expressed gratitude to Dr. Ibrahim while highlighting the college's commitment to fostering collaboration between educational institutions and training sites.

Please refer to the link below:

<https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/pharmacy/news/2023/college-of-pharmacy-and-health-sciences-organizes-a-seminar-on-dealing-with-mentally-ill-patients-a-focus-on-patient-counseling-by-pharmacists>