#### Trent University LogoOPSEU JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Therapist

**Job Number:** A-241 | VIP: 1441

**Band:** OPSEU- 11

**Department:** Counselling Centre / Student Affairs Durham

**Supervisor Title:** Assistant Director, Student Wellness Centre / Manager, Student Wellness (Durham)

**Last Reviewed:**  May 17, 2023

#### **Job Purpose:**

The Therapist promotes student development, success, and retention by engaging students in collaboratively designing a treatment plan, employing a comprehensive range of psycho-social and clinical interventions; and through the coordination of interdisciplinary and community supports. The goal is to promote student wellness through the provision of individual therapy, group therapy, crisis counselling, and clinical consultation. The Therapist will support students in developing improved personal and social effectiveness and enhance the student’s potential for academic success. In fulfilling the Centre’s mandate, the Therapist will foster community wellness through the provision of outreach educational programming and prevention activities geared to enhance the overall wellness of the campus learning environment.

#### Key Activities:

1. **Assessments**: Conduct individual interviews to assess social, emotional, behavioural and psychological functioning, including suicide risk assessment, homicidal risk, and screening for mental status.
2. **Personal Counselling*:*** To use professional judgement, therapeutic techniques and recognised practice models to establish a therapeutic relationship, clarify and identify challenges, offer psychosocial education, and collaboratively develop plans and/or recommendations to assist in achieving therapeutic goals.
3. **Group Counselling**: To design, deliver, and evaluate process therapy groups to meet the identified clinical needs of the student population (i.e.: eating disorders, grief, queer identities, affect regulation, survivors, ACOA).
4. **Crisis Counselling:** To intervene in crisis situations (i.e.: attempted suicide, tragic death, sexual assault) by providing support and assistance through debriefing, supportive counselling and consultation.
5. **Case Management:** To provide case management, support, debriefing, referrals, and follow up as necessary to immediate and/or complex student mental health situations.
6. **Prevention & Education:** To design, deliver, and evaluate workshops and presentations which promote a proactive and holistic approach to health & wellness (i.e. relationships, life balance, interpersonal development; assertiveness, self-esteem).
7. **Consultation & Support:** To assist staff and/or faculty with specific questions and/or concerns about students with whom they work. For example, consultation might be sought for crisis prevention with a student known to be aggressive or disruptive, or for intervention strategies in supporting a suicidal student.
8. **Supervision:** Assist in the supervision of student staff and interns, as needed.
9. **Represent** the Department on University Committees, and the University on community organizations as needed.
10. **Documentation:**To complete thorough intake reports for all incoming clients. To keep accurate and up-to-date notes on each session for ongoing continuity of care and for legal purposes should the need arise.
11. **Privacy:** To ensure compliance with the Personal Health & Information Privacy Act (2004).

#### Education Required:

* Master’s Degree in Psychology, Counselling Psychology, Social Work or related program.

#### Experience/Qualifications Required:

* Three (3) years of direct clinical experience and demonstrated competencies and knowledge of:
  + counselling theories and models of learning and development;
  + ability to assess and manage crisis situations (ex. debriefing skills);
  + person-centred and anti-oppressive practices in psychotherapy;
  + unique issues facing university students and the university-aged population;
  + individual differences and diverse groups;
  + current theoretical, professional, and practical developments in the areas of counselling psychology, psychopathology, counselling interventions and crisis counselling;
* Ethics and standards of professional practice.
* Member or eligibility for membership to a relevant professional association (i.e.: OCSWSSW; CCC; CPA; CRPO).

**Job Evaluation Factors:**

##### Responsibility for the Work of Others

Direct Responsibility

* Therapist Interns

Indirect Responsibility

* Peer Supervision

##### Communication

Requires a high level of tact, courtesy, and strategic communication to discuss and support students with complex concerns (i.e. suicide ideation, mental health, severe trauma, loss, survivors of sexual violence).

Must ensure a clear and accurate exchange of information in order to make informed assessments and provide appropriate support. This includes working with clients who may not be able to verbally communicate clearly.

Must deploy requisite communication skills to establish collaborative therapeutic relationships with students while establishing clear and ethical boundaries.

Provide recommendations and referrals that may be sensitive in nature.

Must be able to communicate cross-culturally.

Internal:

* Counsel students experiencing emotional distress
* Consultation and training to faculty and staff
* Liaise with other University services

External:

* Community mental health, wellness, and cultural organizations and agencies
* Family members

##### Decision Making

When supporting students experiencing an escalated mental health crisis, make informed decisions in order to preserve students’ safety. This includes developing safety and wellness plans.

##### Analytical Reasoning

Required to make complex assessments of students’ mental health to provide appropriate psychotherapy. Uses theoretical and technical frameworks (e.g. DSM-V diagnostic criteria, cognitive behavioural theory, behaviourism) to assess students’ concerns and plan interventions based on current evidence and research. Must consider changing information presented by students, being alert to information not readily presented.

Performing assessments to determine the safety risk a student may pose to themselves or others, differentiating between risk potential and imminent risk to self or others.

Advanced analytical and technical ability to determine an appropriate course of mental health treatment and deliver said interventions in a therapeutic context.

Provides a broad range of clinical interventions to support students with mental health concerns ranging from straightforward concerns to complex presentations.

##### Impact

As a registered health professional, the Therapist is responsible for the secure handling and appropriate documentation of personal health information. The Therapist may be called upon to disclose select personal health information to third parties in the event of student emergencies involving imminent risks to safety.

In providing direct mental health support for students, the Therapist has a direct impact on students’ success and retention at the institution.

The Therapist provides direct support to students whose mental health or behavioural concerns may likely impact the well-being and functioning of other students and on-campus departments.

Working with already vulnerable clients who are reluctant to seek support, satisfaction of service may impact reputation of the Student Wellness Centre with other students.

##### Motor/ Sensory Skills

* Fine motor - Keyboarding
* Visual - Interpret/assess emotional state of students as expressed through visual cues
* Auditory - To interpret/assess emotional state of students as expressed through visual cues

##### Effort

Mental:

* Sustained attentions - Counselling requires a focus on the client to pay attention to both verbal and nonverbal communication
* Sustained concentration - Remain attentive and congruent with clients emotional state
* Sustained composure and professionalism

Physical:

* Sitting - Counselling for 1 hour per student; keyboarding (i.e.: client documentation and communication)

##### Working Conditions

Psychological:

* Stress - Some students are facing psychological or emotional crisis and need professional advice, support and/or referral to other health agencies. Incumbent has no control over occurrence and dealing with a crisis situation can be very stressful.
* Repeat exposure to psychological stress over time leads to a heightened risk of burnout and related health and wellness concerns.
* Fear - Some students can present as unstable, angry and confrontational.
* Vicarious trauma (VT)/secondary traumatic stress (STS) – exposed to difficult or disturbing images and stories secondhand.