

M.I.N.D.
Mental Illness New Directions
Nova Southeastern University

Faculty Advisor: William I. Dorfman

ARTICLE 1. INTRODUCTION

SECTION 1. Statement of Need

Students, the psychologists of the future, lack *awareness of, understanding in, and involvement* with the following areas:

1. Persons with a long term, serious and persistent mental illness (e.g. bipolar, schizophrenia, mental retardation etc.).
2. The importance of community advocacy for improving the future of this population
3. The successful integration and acceptance of this population into the community

SECTION II. Purpose

To educate, motivate, empower and provide opportunities to psychology students to advance the integration and acceptance of persons with a long term mental illness through community efforts aimed at increasing awareness and hosting fundraisers for local facilities in need.

ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES

SECTION II. Internal (understanding advocacy)

A. Increase student understanding of advocacy issues pertinent to psychologists and the populations they serve.

1. Educate students on current issues and collaborate to develop effective plans of action.
2. Motivate students to stand up for a cause that they believe in
3. Motivate students to take an active role in bettering psychology of long term mental illness as a profession.
4. Educating students on psychology's role in the diagnosis and treatment of the seriously mentally ill

B. Increase student involvement in advocacy for persons with a long term mental illness.

1. Provide opportunities for students to become involved in advocacy.
2. Equip students with the resources necessary to make progress and implement change
3. Establish a network of motivated students that will work collaboratively toward the common goal of acceptance and integration of persons with a long term mental illness into the community

SECTION III. External (community outreach)

A. Educate psychology students on community outreach

1. Inform students of the importance of community outreach to a population in need
2. Motivate students to become involved with community advocacy.
3. Equip students with adequate knowledge of the target population.

B. Increase awareness of mental health issues in the public domain.

1. Organize community events to increase the public's understanding of mental health issues.
2. Disseminate information on mental health issues at community events.
3. Target underserved populations (long term mentally ill).

C. Reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues among the general public.

1. Target special population groups such as older individuals, males, and youth that typically hold misconceptions about mental health.
2. Educate the general public on the normalcy and prevalence of mental health disorders, as well as available treatment options and resources.

D. Increase awareness of mental health issues among medical health professionals.

1. Disseminate information to student organizations in medical programs.
2. Disseminate information to professional health organizations in the community.

ARTICLE III. IMPLEMENTATION OF OBJECTIVES

SECTION I. Internal (understanding advocacy)

A. Increase student understanding of advocacy issues pertinent to psychologists and the populations they serve.

1. Hold monthly colloquia meetings with graduate students to provide information on pertinent issues and generate discussions surrounding these issues.
2. Display current issues and obstacles affecting persons with long term mental illness on a bulletin board at the Center for Psychological Studies.

3. Provide instant access to information pertaining to current and ongoing issues through time-sensitive email distributions sent to the group member list serve.
4. Inform students of the gains made through student advocacy and the progress yet to be made at bi-monthly meetings
5. Allow students to share their experiences with advocacy at periodic graduate student-presented workshops.

B. Increase student involvement in advocacy for persons with a long term mental illness.

1. Establish fundraising events to help centers providing care to the long term mentally ill
2. Organize trips to various sites in need and encourage members to become more involved
3. Establish a network of students that will work on advocacy at the state and national level. Students will learn about the advocacy process from each other by sharing their experiences.
4. Include a Topic of the Month section of the monthly newsletter, whereby students write on one important advocacy issue per month.

SECTION II. External (community outreach)

A. Educate psychology students on community outreach.

1. Hold monthly colloquia meetings to increase student awareness of issues that are relevant to the target population
2. Host Quarterly Advocacy Series meetings, where consumers of mental health resources, psychologists involved with advocacy, and administrative bodies of mental health organizations, are invited to speak to students.
3. Provide students for opportunities to become involved as volunteer for advocacy-related presentations for seriously mentally ill populations.
4. Provide students with day trips to 9 Muses walk in center to destigmatize serious mental illness in beginning doctoral students.
5. Post information on volunteering with mental health organizations on group bulletin board.
6. Hold advocacy drives to inform students of the many opportunities for becoming involved with community outreach.

B. Increase awareness of long term mental illness in the public domain.

1. Organize community events such as walks, runs, speeches, and dinners for mental health awareness.
2. Present information on the current status of community integration for the long term mentally ill at health fairs and other community events.

C. Reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues among the general public.

1. Organize events at local schools to provide students with information regarding long term mental illness. These will be organized in conjunction with national awareness days.
2. Present information on long term mental illness in classrooms that are designed to teach health issues within local junior high and high schools.
3. Establish a Quarterly Advocacy Series where students meet at a board member's home hear a presenter speak on issues regarding destigmatization, advocacy for seriously mentally ill populations, and humanistic psychology.
6. Hold fundraising drives for organizations that work to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness, such as NAMI and NMHA

D. Increase awareness of mental health issues among medical health professionals.

1. Provide information about behavioral components of physical health problems to student medical organizations at NSU and at other universities.
2. Provide information about behavioral components of physical health and the impact of mental health on physical health to professors in the Health Professions Division as well as medical professionals in the community.

ARTICLE IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD

SECTION I. Selection of Board Members

Executive Board Members are chosen based on leadership ability, motivation to participate in advocacy issues, and commitment to the mission. At the end of the academic term, current Executive Board Members will meet to discuss possible additions to the board based on member participation over the past year. An academic term is defined as a full school year from August 1st to July 31st.

Individuals selected for board positions will be contacted by Executive Board members to discuss their interest in a position. They will also be oriented the current bylaws, specific role responsibilities, and time commitments. An exception to the selection of Executive Board

Members only at the end of the term involves situations in which members have demonstrated exemplary commitment to the group's mission during the current term such that they may be offered between-term positions, or during situations in which board members that have resigned and must be replaced.

Executive Board Chair (President) and Co-Chair (Vice- President) members are chosen based on the current Chair and Co-Chair decisions of exemplary board member commitment, performance in his or her role, and leadership qualities. The current Chair is required to mentor the Chair-Elect to ensure that the mission is continued and that organization continues to thrive.

SECTION II. Selection of Faculty Supervisor

The faculty advisor of the executive board will be selected by the Chair at the time of the creation of the board. The advisor must be a faculty member of the psychology department with a specific focus on long term mental illness. The selection will be based upon the faculty member's expertise in advocacy, commitment to community endeavors, and history of engagement in advocacy for the profession. The advisor will be informed of all ongoing projects during meetings.

SECTION III. Executive Board Meetings

Executive board meetings will be conducted at a mutually agreed upon time that is decided at the start of the term. Meetings will be scheduled one time per month with board members, and one time per month with board members and faculty advisor. All board members are required to attend both meetings each month, unless extenuating circumstances exist. In the event that a board member is unable to attend a meeting, it is his or her responsibility to inform the board of any recent developments in chaired projects underway.

SECTION IV. Development of Additional Divisions

Defined: A division is defined as a model of Nova Southeastern University Center for Psychological Studies' organization, developed at a graduate psychology department other than Nova Southeastern University Center for Psychological Studies. The Primary group is defined as the organization at Nova Southeastern University Center for Psychological Studies. The group division at respective graduate programs will be titled with the name of the group, <University

Affiliation> Division. The division may be manipulated and modified as the division Chair deems necessary to accommodate the needs of the community, graduate students, and professional initiatives representative of location in which the division is developed.

Recruitment Procedures: The division Chair will be selected by the current Chair of the Primary group. The Primary chair may recruit students throughout the nation to serve as a division Chair in the following ways: through publication of articles in student-oriented journals or newsletters describing the position and its importance, through presentation of posters and papers at national and state psychological association conferences, and through professional networking, as examples. The Chair is free to utilize creativity in determining the most efficient and effective recruitment processes.

Selection Processes: The interested graduate students will be selected on the basis of merit, commitment to advocacy for the profession, and leadership qualities. It is necessary that the division Chair be a doctoral student in good standing with his or her academic department, and the he or she be at least two years from graduation at the start of term as Chair. The qualities of interested students will be ascertained through submission of an essay describing these qualities, by the Primary Chair's previous involvement with the individual and acknowledgement of his or her meritorious accomplishments, or by telephone interview.

Communication with Primary Chair: The elected Chair of respective divisions will maintain contact with the Chair of the Primary organization in order to ensure that the goals, mission, objectives and conceptualization of the organization are maintained. The Primary Chair will engage in ongoing mentoring of the division Chairs in order to respond to department or location concerns, and to provide resources for opportunities to be provided to students.

Development of Division-Specific Executive Boards: The executive boards at respective divisions will be selected by the current division Chair. The chair may request a 500-word document from interested candidates, which highlights his or her previous community and legislative advocacy involvement, leadership skills, commitment and motivation to the group's initiatives, and interest in advocacy endeavors.

Procedures: The divisions will abide by the guidelines set forth by the Primary division. These may be found within the objectives and implementation sections described earlier. The additional chapters may utilize the Primary group's past activities page as an example of the types of endeavors to become involved with.

SECTION V. Executive Board Roles

Faculty Advisor: William I Dorfman, Ph.D

Chair (President)

- Organize meetings with faculty advisor
- Organize meetings among executive board members
- Communicate with those involved in advocacy at other universities and continue to expand the group to other Florida Universities
- Organize quarterly advocacy series meetings
- Collaborate with NAMI and MHA to forward their goals and increase student involvement in advocacy for consumers
- Inform members of conferences, workshops, and volunteer opportunities relevant to the group's mission

Co-Chair (Vice-President)

- Oversee and contribute to new and ongoing projects
- Advise board members on projects
- Manage the duties of board members, allocating specific deadlines to tasks and duties
- Check email weekly

External Advocacy Representative

- Organize ongoing as well as time-limited outreach projects
- Promote student involvement in projects and oversee student training and implementation of outreach involvement

External Advocacy Co-Representative (if necessary)

- Assistant to the External Advocacy Representative
- Provide support with large projects and other ongoing missions of the board

Internal Advocacy Representative (may be combined with membership coordinator)

- Engage in ongoing research on important initiatives that affect psychologists and consumers
- Keep the board and students informed of current issues by posting monthly updates on bulletin board
- Keep members up to date by forwarding information to newsletter editor in a timely manner

Internal Advocacy Co-Representative

- Assistant to the Internal Advocacy Representative
- Provide support with large projects and other ongoing missions of the board

Membership Coordinator/Newsletter Editor

- Editor of newsletter: compiling past months activities and future events, compiling topic of the month commentary
- Engaging member involvement through topic of the month discussions
- Updating of membership database and ensuring that all board members have member contact information
- Ensuring that the group is represented during orientation for new students, interview day, and open houses, and holding membership brown bags
- Coordinate and hold informational meetings for students
- Updating the website

Research and Fund Raising Representative

- Engage in ongoing research for funding possibilities
- Pursue various funding options
- Complete necessary paperwork to gain funding
- Chair advocacy projects

- Chair Continuing Education workshop for psychologists

General Board Member Duties

- Develop student informational flyers for fundraisers.
- Chair new advocacy projects (subcommittees) as they arise.
- Attend monthly board meetings and monthly advisor meetings
- Participate in events whenever possible
- Encourage students to participate whenever possible
- Communicate effectively with other board members regarding ongoing projects
- Meet project deadlines
- Explore possibilities for internal and external advocacy projects, and consult with board before undertaking new projects
- When possible, open up home to hold advocacy dinner series meetings
- Commit to 5 hours per week
- Emailing & calling necessary persons asking for support
- Advertising for brown bags & other events to students

SECTION VI. Subcommittee Procedures for Chairs

- A subcommittee refers to any project under the operation of the group; these include legislative advocacy projects, community outreach projects, educational workshops and colloquia.
- Subcommittee chairs assume such positions on a voluntary basis and as projects arise.
- Subcommittees may be created by executive board members or general members, but only board members may chair subcommittees.
- As chairs of subcommittees, board members are responsible for ensuring that the undertaken project is successfully completed by reliable students. Students should be initially screened for dedication and reliability.

- Board members should strive to engage students in fulfilling a large portion of the project, since this is a student-oriented organization which intends to provide members with meaningful advocacy-related opportunities.
- Subcommittee chairs will communicate effectively with the executive board during bi-monthly board meetings.
- Board members may be asked to follow deadlines proposed by the executive board; Subcommittee chairs will take such factors into account when planning projects with subcommittee members.
- Board members may decide to complete a subcommittee independently (i.e., without the assistance of members) when the project is small scale, or when the board member discerns that the project is better suited to the involvement of one individual.
- Board members adhere to the following guidelines upon assuming a subcommittee chair position:
 1. Member information is obtained from the Membership Coordinator who will provide updated member listings to all board members when appropriate.
 2. Subcommittee members will contact members whose interest patterns (as delineated on membership applications) match the goals of the current project. Members may be contacted via email or telephone.
 3. *All* members may be contacted in the event that few members' interests match the proposed initiatives, or in the event that the project is a large scale undertaking requiring several students.
 4. Following the initial member recruitment, subcommittee chairs will arrange to hold an informational meeting for the interested members. The informational meeting is designed to orient members to the project, assign and delegate roles, and brainstorm the various ways in which the project may be accomplished.
 5. Subsequent meetings with subcommittee members are scheduled on an as-needed basis.
 6. In the event that a member involved with a project fails to fulfill the requirements assigned to him or her, the subcommittee chair will be responsible for fulfilling the roles of that member.
 7. Upon completion of the project, the subcommittee will no longer exist, and the board member may or may not choose to chair a new subcommittee.

Note: All board members are subject to review on a biyearly (every 6 months) basis. Additional review may be conducted if warranted. Board members who are not fulfilling duties will be provided with an initial warning and one week to rectify the problem situations/areas. Removal of board members is at the full discretion of the President and Faculty Advisor but must be

justified and should be agreed upon by the majority of the board.